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CAN ECONOMIC CRISES CONSTITUTE COLLECTIVE IDENTITY CRISES?
THE CASE OF GREEK EUROPEAN IDENTITY DURING THE GREEK DEBT/EUROZONE CRISIS

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September 2016

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Can economic crises constitute collective identity crises? The case of Greek European identity during the Greek debt/Eurozone crisis

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Thesis summary:

This thesis consists of a socio-psychological study of Greek European identity within the context of the Greek debt/Eurozone crisis. Drawing insights from Social Representations Theory (SRT) and Social Identity Theory (SIT), it approaches the question of identity in a dual manner, as a representation and a psychological experience. The motivation of the research is enacted through the questioning of whether economic crises can provoke crises of collective identities. Its contribution is both theoretical and empirical. The thesis argues that although the term 'identity crisis' is a frequently used one, especially in conditions of post-modernity, an analytical elucidation of the varied destabilising dynamics behind potential 'identity crises' is unclear within existing literature. Furthermore, it is postulated that as useful and enlightening a social psychological approach may be for the study of identities, and although SIT's focus on identity threats as destabilising for group self-esteem can help us understand identity dynamics, the discipline still lacks a more systematic analytical framework of identity destabilisations. The thesis develops an elaborate typology and conceptualisation of identity destabilisations and operationalises it for the study of Greek European identity through a triangulated single case study research design, combining a variety of data sources, such as historiographical data, media texts, expert and elite interviews, and interviews with non-expert citizens. The typology includes the destabilisations of identity conflict, identity devaluation, identity overvaluation and identity deficit. The results of the study indicate that the public discourse of the debt/Eurozone crisis has been abundant in representations of all such identity destabilisations. The interviews with Greek experts and elites, called in this study 'ideational leaders', and with non-expert citizens, designate that the most prevalent forms of identity destabilisation, both at the level of representation and of psychological experience in Greek society are those of identity conflict and identity devaluation. The results show a distinct public preoccupation with ideas, such as national self-reflection and collective responsibility. The representations made by expert and non-expert citizens approximate each other quite closely, while comparisons across the data sources and across time bring to the fore continuities of narratives and identity representations, which are explained within SRT's assumption of anchoring as a return to previously established knowledge for the comprehension of new phenomena, as well as within the constraints faced by discursive actors in their attempts to construct new realities. It is concluded that a new narrative is necessitated for Greek European identity.

Keywords: identity conflict, identity deficit, identity destabilisation, identity devaluation, identity overvaluation, social psychology

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADEDY	Civil Servants' Confederation (ΑΔΕΔΥ - Ανώτατη Διοίκηση Ενώσεων Δημοσίων Υπαλλήλων)
ANEL	Independent Greeks (ΑΝΕΛ - Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες)
ANTARSYA	Front of the Anticapitalist, Revolutionary, Communist Left and Radical Ecology (ΑΝΤΑΡΣΥΑ - Μέτωπο της Αντικαπιταλιστικής, Επαναστατικής, Κομμουνιστικής Αριστεράς και της Ριζοσπαστικής Οικολογίας)
Brexit	Exit of the United Kingdom from the EU
DIMAR	Democratic Left (ΔΗΜΑΡ - Δημοκρατική Αριστερά)
EC	European Commission
ECB	European Central Bank
EEC	European Economic Community
ELIAMEP	Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ΕΛΙΑΜΕΠ - Ελληνικό Ίδρυμα Ευρωπαϊκής και Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής)
EMU	European Monetary Union
EPAM	United Pan-Popular Front (ΕΠΑΜ - Ενιαίο Παλλαϊκό Μέτωπο)
ESIEA	Journalists' Union of Athens Daily Newspapers (ΕΣΗΕΑ - Ένωση Συντακτών Ημερησίων Εφημερίδων Αθηνών)
EU	European Union
EUI	European University Institute
FYROM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GCEA	Greece's Council of Economic Advisors (ΣΟΕ - Σώμα Οικονομικών Εμπειρογνομόνων)
GD	Golden Dawn (Χρυσή Αυγή)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GFC	Global Financial Crisis
Grexite	Exit of Greece from the Eurozone or the EU
IFC	International Financial Commission
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KKE	Communist Party of Greece (ΚΚΕ - Κομμουνιστικό Κόμμα Ελλάδος)
LAOS	Popular Orthodox Rally (ΛΑΟΣ - Λαϊκός Ορθόδοξος Συναγερμός)
MEP	Member of the European Parliament

MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
MT	Maastricht Treaty (formally, the Treaty on European Union or TEU)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
ND	New Democracy (Νέα Δημοκρατία)
PASOK	Panhellenic Socialist Movement (ΠΑΣΟΚ - Πανελλήνιο Σοσιαλιστικό Κίνημα)
RIIA	Royal Institute of International Affairs
SEK	Socialist Labour Party (ΣΕΚ - Σοσιαλιστικό Εργατικό Κόμμα)
SGP	Stability and Growth Pact
SIT	Social Identity Theory
SRT	Social Representations Theory
SYRIZA	Coalition of the Radical Left (ΣΥΡΙΖΑ - Συνασπισμός της Ριζοσπαστικής Αριστεράς)
Troika	Group of European Central Bank, European Commission and International Monetary Fund
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
WB	World Bank
WWI	First World War
WWII	Second World War

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Introduction

'Individuals and societies are looked at from the outside... if Britain went through such a crisis, we would have at least a thousand books with very deep analyses, here we only have a few that just try to blame somebody else... hence, our weakness to become the object of our observation'

(Ramfos, 2014)

'I think the economic and political element, unfortunately... will always overwhelm the cultural and national identities... I don't know who study these, if they do, and if you can study them beyond a few conferences at some universities, when on top of you there's unemployment, wars [...] closeby... so, all of these detract this process'

(Panousis, 2014)

'The Greek who encounters the hostility and distrust of those, only those, Europeans who read the same tabloids that our people read here too, experiences a small shock... which comes to be added – you have to be a social psychologist to explain this! – and makes a mix of complexing elements of inferiority and superiority, which is explosive...'

(Matsaganis, 2014) ¹

Economic crisis and collective identity

World history, both modern and pre-modern, is full of financial and economic crises. From the Roman *Imperial Crisis* of the 3rd century and the Renaissance 'manias', such as the Dutch *Tulip Mania* of 1637, to the 'panics' of the 19th century and 'crashes' of the 20th, economic turmoil has evolved hand in hand with human societies (Kindleberger & Aliber, 2011; Shah *et al.*, 2013). Historical research reveals that economic crises often come in waves, during which an original crisis-inflicted

¹ All three quotations on this page come from this study's expert interviews. Expert participants agreed to be interviewed eponymously. A full list of interviewees is located in Appendix 1. Interviews were conducted in Greek. Translations were conducted by the author.

epicentre exerts financial pressures transnationally, causing in its passage severe challenges on other national economies, particularly fragile developing ones (Reinhart & Rogoff, 2014). During these crisis waves, which may be more or less extensive in their international impact, some countries may enter into financial distress and even default on their external debts (Berkmen *et al.*, 2009; Reinhart & Rogoff, 2014). Debt itself has been demonstrated to be a rather perennial financial relationship, as various historians observe in their explorations of early agrarian empires or medieval city-states in Europe (Graeber, 2011; Stasavage, 2016). Under this light, sovereign debt defaults, 'far from being exceptional', are 'in fact rather common' (Oosterlinck, 2013: 698).

Based on a 'panoramic view of financial crises' (Reinhart & Rogoff, 2014), one might be tempted to believe that these are somehow banal or mundane, if only for their staggering frequency in time and space and recurring misconduct of financial actors (Askari *et al.*, 2014). However, the social repercussions of financial crises are anything but trivial, since they can cause significant social dislocation and unexpected hardship (Hill & Chu, 2001). As an extension, we should anticipate that economic crises may have an impact on social identities (Norris, 2016). For example, during a world recession, millions of workers may lose their jobs (Ciro, 2016), while poverty and unemployment can dramatically impact on individuals' sense of self (Norris, 2016). From mental illness, like depression and suicidal ideation (Economou *et al.*, 2013a, 2013b), to the devastating loss of human capability (Blyth, 2013; Nussbaum, 2011), the impact on individual lives can be immense and even diachronic. Blyth (2013), for instance, in his critique of austerity, autobiographically unfolds his transition from a 'welfare kid' to a university professor, pointing out that the demise of welfare states during recessions can deprive young generations of life opportunities and social mobility, therefore of desired future 'possible selves' (Oyserman & James, 2012).

However, economic crises are not only experienced individually, but they are also experienced collectively by entire societies (Carrington, 2015), therefore they should have an impact not only on the personal identities of individuals, but also on their collective identities. In this sense, although

nationals of countries undergoing an economic crisis are differentially affected based on various demographic characteristics (Herrero, 2013), they share a collective experience to some degree, since they are subjected to the same macro-economic fluctuations. Furthermore, economic crises can turn into political ones, which hold the capacity to adversely influence entire national polities (Bosco & Verney, 2012). For example, during the Asian financial crisis of the nineties, Indonesia experienced a two-year leadership crisis and ethnic tensions that further obstructed its recovery (Hill & Chu, 2001). Moreover, defaults followed by necessitated bailouts by international creditors and the demands made in bailout agreements can exacerbate political crises by mobilising domestic resistance and adding further tensions on a country's foreign relations (Hill & Chu, 2001).

Collective identities have long been considered as capable of playing a pacifying and positive role in societies distressed by large-scale adverse phenomena, such as crises (Karolewski *et al.*, 2016; Mitchell, 2016). Collective identities are defined as 'an individual's cognitive, moral and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution' (Polleta & Jasper, 2001: 285). The more benevolent and constructive the connections made by individuals to their communities and institutions, the more peaceful, resilient and effective the latter are expected to be (Karolewski *et al.*, 2016; Mitchell, 2016). Two distinct political and historical formations in search of a collective identity, and the unity this is charged with, are the modern nation-state and the transnational organisation of the European Union (EU) (Karolewski, 2006).

Within the context of European integration and the establishment of the EU, after its previous historical formations, as a means for overcoming the consequences of the World War II (WWII) and unifying a broken continent (Garton Ash, 2012), national identities are not only meant to be national, but they are also hoped to become European, embracing the integrationist goal and overcoming their nationalist versions (Guibernau, 2011). Nevertheless, European identities come in national versions (Marcussen *et al.*, 1999; Mummenday & Waldzus, 2004), because member-states hold their respective visions, memories and experiences of Europe (Katzenstein & Checkel, 2009). As

such, it is more accurate to refer to a Spanish European identity, a Slovenian European identity, a Swedish European identity, rather than simply, a Spanish, Slovenian or Swedish identity. The European addition to national identities has traditionally been conceptualised as the political and cultural 'glue' that would bind European nations together (Karolewski, 2011; Triandafyllidou & Gropas, 2015). This unifying element has been enacted to an important one, especially since the wake of the Euro crisis and the respective sovereign crises around Europe (Fligstein *et al.*, 2012; Risse, 2014).

The present thesis is a socio-psychological study of national European identities in Greece, 'the Eurozone member most severely affected by the current economic crisis' (Clements *et al.*, 2014: 247). Its central aim is to investigate whether Greece's economic crisis, as this is experienced within the wider context of European integration during times of crisis, constitutes an identity crisis of Greek European identity. This aim is motivated by the wider problematisation regarding to what degree and in what ways economic crises may provoke collective identity destabilisations, or even identity crises. As such, this thesis aims to explore an issue, such as a financial crisis, which is usually studied through an economic or political economy approach, through the different lenses of an identity perspective (Galpin, 2014; Norris, 2016). Furthermore, existing literature usually addresses the question of national identity crisis primarily with reference to post-conflict societies (i.e. Nodia, 1996; Pheralia & Garratt, 2014) or post-colonial transitions (i.e. Antony, 2013; Mazrui, 2013) and rarely looks at it with reference to the aftermath of economic failure (i.e. Armony & Armony, 2005). Although economic crises are not as devastating as war and direct violence, the structural and cultural violence they may induce can be quite detrimental (Galtung, 1969, 1990). Finally, this thesis argues that existing theories of 'identity crisis' do not adequately or fittingly account for the diversity of collective identity phenomena under crisis conditions and as such, it aims to contribute to a more clarified classification of identity destabilisations during such times.

This introduction will continue by providing a presentation of the current historical interval of the Euro crisis, as well as an overview of national European identities in the context of European integration, before moving on to presenting the case of Greece and the Greek debt crisis. Subsequently, the research questions, aims, and rationale of this thesis will be outlined, followed by an exposition of the theoretical and empirical contributions of the study. Finally, a structure of the thesis will be offered.

National European identities and the Euro crisis

According to the diachronic perspective above, it would appear that we are now historically situated on one such crisis wave, in the form of the *Global Financial Crisis* (GFC), which emanated in 2007-2008 with the bursting of the US housing bubble and the collapse of *Lehman Brothers* (Ciro, 2016; Reinhart & Rogoff, 2014). This latest crisis wave has been described as the worst one since the *Great Depression* of the 1930s, and was accordingly labelled the *Great Recession* (Ciro, 2016). After the original trigger, crisis symptoms first became evident in Europe with Britain's 'credit crunch' in 2007-2008 (Thain, 2009), Iceland's banking crisis (2008-2011) (Boyes, 2009), and the early 2008-2009 bailouts of Latvia, Hungary and Romania by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB), and the European Union (EU) (Blyth, 2013). However, the most notable and enduring manifestation of what came to be known as the *Euro crisis* was the additional and more extended bailouts of Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Cyprus, and Spain, by the EU and the IMF, after these Eurozone member-states experienced financial upheaval (Breuss, 2016; Zestos, 2016). This series of sovereign crises was crowned by the wider crisis of the Eurozone, which reanimated debates whether the European Monetary Union (EMU) is a sustainable 'optimum currency area' (Eichengreen, 2012; Mundell, 1961).

The Euro currency was designed to be one of the greatest initiatives in the process of European integration, intimately related to a collective European identity (Kennedy, 2012). The relationship

between the currency and a common European identity was understood as a reciprocal one, whereby the currency was expected to help with the sense of belonging to a shared economic and political community, and simultaneously, a collective identity functioning as a empowering element for sustaining the monetary union by inspiring support for EU economic policies (Galpin, 2014; Kaelberer, 2004). Alas, the Euro crisis imposed grave challenges on European integration.

Recent empirical research substantiates the increase of Euroscepticism, defined as negative attitudes towards European integration (Taggart, 1998), decline of support for the EU, and rise of nationalism within the continent (Karolewski *et al.*, 2016; Mitchell, 2016; Serricchio *et al.*, 2013). As indicated in the last Euroelections, Eurosceptic parties were enforced (Hobolt & de Vries, 2016; Treib, 2014). These developments directly affect the political legitimacy and democratic *raison d'être* of the EU, since political systems necessitate public support to be considered democratic (Galpin, 2014; Mitchell, 2016). As such, many have argued recently that there should be an alarming problematisation with the state of European identities inside the Euro crisis, since this could become a profound and long-term turning point in public support for European integration (Kuhn, 2015; Risse, 2014). Decreasing popular support could make the EU vulnerable to deeper crisis, because it could obstruct collective decision-making and consensus-building for the purposes of resolving the economic crisis (Karolewski, 2011; Karolewski *et al.*, 2016).

To be sure, the idea of the EU being in a 'state of crisis' is anything but new (Hoffmann, 1964, 1994; Jenkins, 2008), especially since the post-Maastricht decline of the 'permissive consensus' and elevation of the 'constraining dissensus' (Hooghe & Marks, 2009). Empirical research over time repeatedly indicates that most Europeans feel primarily attached to their national, rather than their European identities (Fligstein *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, citizens who participate more in transnational European experiences are more likely to develop a European identity, while those whose economic and social horizons are more local are more likely to assert nationalist identities (Fligstein *et al.*, 2012; Kuhn, 2015). One of the dominant factors in facilitating transnational European lives, thus

identities, is a 'country's economic wealth' with citizens of prosperous EU member-states having more access to the European experience (Kuhn, 2015: 145). Furthermore, past research indicates that as long as perceptions of the economy remain positive and the EU is viewed as beneficial, citizens tend to support the EU (Gabel & Whitten, 1997; Verhaegen *et al.*, 2014). As such, there has been a wider relationship between economic factors and collective identities.

However, in a time of increased politicisation of the EU, material interests are contested and perceptions of benefit become varied and intensely debated (de Wilde & Zurn, 2012). For example, in the recent Brexit referendum on EU membership, one could hear both *Leavers* and *Remainers* being motivated by concerns about improving British economy and living conditions (Goodwin & Milazzo, 2015). Ultimately, what appears to be crucial is how the relationship between national and European identities is mobilised in public debates to account for specific events, such as crises, since identities are highly situational, time and context specific (Chalaniova, 2014; Hooghe & Marks, 2009; Risse, 2010). As such, it is important and fruitful to explore identities with reference to specified events, situations and historical contexts and the Euro crisis offers itself for such an endeavour (Chalaniova, 2014). The next section will focus on the case study of this thesis.

The case of Greece

In the context of the Euro crisis, some have argued that the EU as an institution is going through an 'existential crisis' (Giddens, 2012; Jones, 2012) or possibly even an 'identity crisis' (Galpin, 2014; Ntampoudi, 2015). However, countries experience financial crisis differently (Hill & Chu, 2001). The same has been the case for European countries troubled by this recent wave of crises, not only because the economic factors were different in each country (Zestos, 2016), but also because each country experienced the crisis through its respective national identity (Galpin, 2014). The new divide between debtors and creditors reanimates pre-existing redistributive conflicts within the EU, which encourage diverse national experiences, thus identities (Hooghe & Marks, 2009; Karolewski *et*

al., 2016; Mitchell, 2016). As such, it is argued in this thesis that we need deep analyses of single cases within the EU to fully understand the respective identity experiences of member-states during the crisis. In this respect, it is estimated that Greece can offer an intriguing case study for multiple reasons, which are explained hereafter.

Among the five bailout countries, Greece's multiple bailouts were not only the largest in sum (Zahariadis, 2016), but also the most controversial (Bickes *et al.*, 2014b; Tekin, 2014), while the Greek crisis has been more intractable compared to these other countries' crises (Breuss, 2016). In late 2009, the newly elected Greek government of George Papandreou, leader of PASOK (Panhellenic Socialist Movement) announced that deficit and debt ratios were larger than previously estimated with a 12.5% deficit, instead of 3.7%, of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and public debt accounting for 115% of GDP (Karyotis & Gerodimos, 2015). Moreover, it was revealed that statistics were systematically and deliberately misreported by Greek authorities, therefore Greece had essentially joined the EMU without meeting the criteria of the Maastricht Treaty (MT) and the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) (Mayer, 2012). In May 2010, Greece received an unprecedented bailout package in the form of a 110 billion loan, administered by what came to be known as the *Troika*, a crisis management formation consisting of the IMF, the European Central Bank (ECB) and the European Commission (EC) (Karyotis & Gerodimos, 2015). In light of the deterioration of the Greek economy over the following years and fears over the endangerment of the EMU, two more Troika bailouts followed in 2011 and 2015 (Zahariadis, 2016).

Each bailout was conditional upon the implementation of various policies, including austerity measures, salary cuts, tax increases, public spending decreases, privatisations and pension reforms, which were respectively specified within a *Memorandum of Understanding* (MoU) (Hirsch, 2015). Every time a new Memorandum was ratified by a Greek government it was met with intense public resistance, protests and riots by newly impoverished populations (Diani & Kousis, 2014; Karyotis & Rüdiger, 2015). The wider unrest led to the disintegration of the pre-existing two-party political system

with the demise of the previously popular PASOK, which was now blamed for the state of the economy (Sotiropoulos, 2013), and a sequence of governmental instability, marked by volatile elections (Teperoglu & Tsatsanis, 2014), non-elected interim governments, such as that of ex-banker Lucas Papademos (Pappas & Aslanidis, 2015), rise of new political forces, including the neo-Nazi extreme right-wing Golden Dawn (GD) (Georgiadou, 2013), and SYRIZA (Coalition of the Radical Left) (Katsabekis, 2015), culminating in the latter's electoral victory in January 2015.

Simultaneously, Greece's EU relations became particularly strained during the crisis and some political actors, including key figure German Finance Minister, Wolfgang Schäuble, even stated that a *Grexit*, Greece's departure from the Eurozone, would be a desirable outcome (Tsoukalis, 2013, Zestos, 2016). Moreover, media and academic accounts engaged with the question of Greece's possible 'expulsion' or 'compulsory withdrawal' from the Eurozone/EU (Blocher *et al.*, 2016; Schuster, 2015). The looming threat of Grexit, whether enforced, negotiated or accidental, became an ever-present feature of the public 'crisis talk' and was associated with a rather precarious default for Greece and possible repercussions for the EMU (McDonnell, 2014; Tsoukalis, 2013). Furthermore, it sparked discussions regarding Greece's political exclusion, which invited preoccupations with European solidarity and unity (Bickes *et al.*, 2014b; Tsoukalis, 2013), the axiomatic pillars of common European identity, and placed a question mark on Greece's European identity (Nixon, 2015).

The specific focus of this thesis is whether the Greek debt crisis, as manifested within the wider Euro crisis, has constituted a collective identity crisis of Greek European identity. The case of Greece presents us with an interesting case study because Greece was the European country that was hit the worst by the crisis, both economically and politically (Pappas & Aslanidis, 2015). In terms of tangible effects in the real economy, annual growth rates began declining sharply in 2008, only to remain negative since then, while between 2008 and 2013 alone, Greece lost more than 25% of its GDP and investment fell by 58% (Cafruny, 2015; Pappas & Aslanidis, 2015). At the same time, the

debt to GDP ratio skyrocketed from a 109.4% in 2008 to a magnificent 180.1% in 2014 (Eurostat, 2016), while exports experienced an 'absolute decline' (Cafruny, 2015). Unemployment increased from about 8% in 2007 to a stunning 27% in 2014, youth unemployment in particular reached a striking 60%, while material deprivation doubled between 2009 and 2014 (Cafruny, 2015; Maselli, 2015; Pappas & Aslanidis, 2015). Cross-country studies across Europe indicated that Greece showed the highest increase in poverty between 2006 and 2012 (Alkire & Apablaza, 2016).

In terms of the symbolic politics of the crisis, recent research has shown that media coverage of the Greek crisis was both quantitatively larger and qualitatively more negative than other sovereign crises' coverage (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Tzogopoulos, 2013). Although several commentators have frequently referred to issues of negative stereotyping of Greece and the European South, empirical studies remain scarce (i.e. Chalaniova, 2014; Mylonas, 2012). Moreover, there are several unexplored areas of interest, since most such studies focus solely on media coverage and fail to engage the wider civil society, therefore lack the responses of citizens. Furthermore, most of these studies on stereotypes do not use systematic and acknowledged theories of stereotyping, therefore cannot fully address societal effects and dynamics. Stereotypes can have adverse effects on collective identities and as such, may contribute to the development of identity destabilisation, or even crisis.

Recent public opinion studies indicate that the crisis era has been a 'game-changer' in attitudes towards European integration in Greece, with the rising vote for Eurosceptic parties being not simply a side-effect of domestic protest, but rather targeted against the EU itself (Verney, 2015). Nonetheless, although Euroscepticism has risen (Freire *et al.*, 2014), support for the Euro has paradoxically increased (Clements *et al.*, 2014). However, the reasons behind such contradictory opinions and political choices are less than clear in the literature, because the limited number of existing studies are based exclusively on survey data, either from the Eurobarometer or national election studies, which leave various questions on the quality of public support unanswered or

exclude disaffected non-voters. As such, questions on the possible 'identity crisis' of Greek European identity remain largely unexplored. The purpose of this thesis is to gain insight into these problematisations, which will be further explained in the following sections.

Research questions, aims and rationale

The main problematisation of the present thesis is whether economic crises can transform into collective identity crises. How do such critical historical moments, marked by failure and dissolution, impact on communities? What happens to societies during 'difficult times'? How does the collective sense of self react to such distressing conditions? To be sure, the notion of 'identity crisis' is not uncommon when theorising in conditions of 'high modernity' and globalisation (Bendle, 2002; Dunn, 1998). Several postmodernist theorists speak of the fragmented character of the globalised individual in late modernity, deprived of universalities and stabilities (Giddens, 1991; Van Ham, 2001), and conclude with the impossibility of identity coherence (Ziakas, 2016). As a consequence, in our 'post-modern times', we have become overtly accustomed to hear about 'identity crises' (Lawler, 2008; Van Ham, 2001). Yet, interestingly, clear analytical classifications of identity destabilisations that may promote 'identity crises' are not found in abundance. Furthermore, the term is often evoked loosely, without specified definitions. A mere exploration of the available literature exhibits the tendency: apparently most academic disciplines themselves or objects of their study suffer from an 'identity crisis' (i.e. Benbasat & Zmud, 2003; Crane & Small, 1992). Consequently, the term, *as is used*, appears to be more of a flashy punchline and a metaphor, rather than a systematic investigation of different destabilising identity phenomena.

In this sense, one of the primary aims of this thesis is the crafting of *a typology of identity destabilisations that may lead to a 'crisis' of identity*. Post-modernism and post-structuralism, appeared to offer thin theorisations of identity, since they already assume its 'eclipse' (Ziakas, 2016). Psychoanalysis's excessive use of metaphor (Wurmser, 1977) seemed to fail to account for the

politics of its own cultural constructs (i.e. gender equality as ‘penis envy’, Buhle, 1998), while its postulate of the ‘elusive and unlocatable’ unconscious (Ffytche, 2016: 14) could present epistemological problems, especially in participatory types of research that seek to engage the public. The only elaborate theoretical framework of ‘identity crisis’ *as such*, with clear postulates and terminologies, appeared to be that of Erik Erikson’s developmental psychology (1968, 1970), focusing on the crisis of transitioning from adolescence to adulthood. However, the focus on coming-of-age transitions was judged to be better suited for the study of personal identities, rather than collective identities, such as national European ones. As an extension, this thesis’s theoretical preoccupation centres on whether there are multiple identity crisis dynamics at play and how these could be conceptually elucidated.

However, the rationale and aims of this thesis are not merely theoretical. Jaspal *et al.* (2014) argue that when confronted with major crises, we need to consider and successfully integrate three levels of analysis, namely 1) how knowledge about these events is constructed and circulated (representations), 2) the role of identity in relation to these representations, and 3) people’s responses to these representations (action). We can appreciate that in this nexus of *representation-identity-action* there are no one-way currents and all three interact with each other. For example, identity mediates between the other two in the sense that ‘who we are’ is influenced by surrounding representations and is directly linked to the actions we choose to pursue (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014). Similarly, our actions define our identity, which in turn plays a role in the kind of representations we embrace or reject, reproduce or forget. Ultimately, the projection of a chosen representation is in itself a choice of action.

Drawing from all of the above, the research questions that guide this thesis are the following:

- What kind of knowledge is produced about the Greek debt/Euro crisis (representations) and how is collective identity related to that knowledge?

- How do Greek citizens respond (action) to the knowledge (representation) that is produced about the Greek debt/Euro crisis and the role of Greek European identity in it?
- Does the Greek debt/Euro crisis constitute an identity crisis of Greek European identity?

The two first questions attempt to incorporate the three levels of analysis advocated by Jaspal and his colleagues, while the final question seeks to respond to the problematisation regarding the impact of major economic crises on collective identities. Having unpacked the research questions of this study, the following section will outline the theoretical and epistemological approach taken in this exploration.

A social psychological approach: identity as representation and experience

The theoretical approach of this thesis belongs to the field of social psychology, defined as ‘the scientific investigation of how the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others’ (Allport in Hogg & Vaughan, 2014: 4). It is accepted that a social psychological framework is fitting for the study of national European identities, which are collective identities (Karolewski, 2006), since these are shaped and enacted in the presence of other nationals and Europeans citizens, whether real or imagined (Anderson, 1991; Thiel & Friedman, 2012).

As might be discernible from the analytical levels and questions above, identity is understood here in a twofold manner: as a form of knowledge about ourselves and others, the *representation*, and as an *experience*, an active reception and dynamic response to that knowledge, as well as participation in its creation and recreation. While the first necessitates the understanding of identity as a *social construction* that is shaped by the ideas circulating within societies (Berger & Luckmann, 2011; Rousseau, 2006), the second acknowledges identity as a *psychological experience* (Fogel, 2005). It is argued in this thesis that an adequate study of identity needs to engage with both of these

dimensions to fully account for the production, reception and reproduction of social identities (Hall, 2000). As argued by Hall (2000), it is exactly at the intersection of the symbolic (representation) and psychic (psychological) dimensions of identity that research challenges arise, therefore we need both a theory of representations and of identities to account for identity phenomena.

In order to account for the two dimensions of identity phenomena, this research heavily draws from two social psychological theories, Serge Moscovici's *Social Representations Theory* (SRT) (2001) and Henri Tajfel and John Turner's *Social Identity Theory* (SIT) (2004). Both theories are cognitivist in nature, in line with social psychology's traditional ontology (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014), in the sense that both elaborate on mental associations between different ideas and the perceptive ways that fluid social ideas become concrete 'social objects' and inform attitudes (Moscovici 1984; Tajfel, 1969). Additionally, while SRT is social constructionist in character and concentrates on what Moscovici calls 'the battle of ideas' (Moscovici, 1998a: 403), thus the ideational aspect of social reality, SIT adds a social interactionist edge that accounts for intergroup relations and processes of stereotyping (Turner, 1996). This last focus of SIT is evaluated to be particularly useful, especially since as explained earlier, recent research has indicated that there were such processes involved in the Greek debt/Euro crisis (Tzogopoulos, 2013), albeit not adequately addressed with a systematic theory of stereotyping, such as SIT.

Following the paradigm of a relatively small niche of social psychologists who demonstrate that the combination of the two theories for the study of identities can lead to fruitful inquiries (Elcheroth *et al.*, 2011; Jaspal *et al.*, 2014; Howarth, 2011), this thesis uses an integrated theoretical framework of SRT and SIT. This framework largely informs the ontological, epistemological and terminological positions of this thesis. For instance, SRT is a theory that seeks to understand where representations about complex and specialised issues come from and how they are further diffused within the wider society (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014). In its inception, SRT meant to account for the ways 'expert knowledge'

was spread outside the narrow groups of scientists and became ‘common sense’ for people outside the field of science (Moscovici, 2008).

Informed by this framework, this thesis argues that issues such as ‘financial crises’ and ‘national European identities’ are specialised terms that are primarily defined, framed and negotiated by expert professionals (de Rosa, 2013), such as politicians, academics, and journalists. These professional groups are labelled in this thesis ‘ideational leaders’ (Stiller, 2010), because such professionals exercise systematic expression of expert opinion and commentary, therefore have the power to influence social audiences through their ideas and lead public debates (de Rosa, 2013). At the same time, social audiences themselves adopt or reject the ideational objects of expert representations and variably incorporate them in their everyday discussions (Moscovici, 2008).

However, although an SRT/SIT model comes close to better accounting for the phenomena at hand, some aspects are still not touched upon by their happy theoretical marriage. For example, although the focus of SIT on ‘identity threat’ based on stereotyping and strategies of ‘identity threat management’ (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014), are especially informative in this exploration of collective identity destabilisations and crises, social psychology still misses an analytical framework of multiple and diverse identity destabilisations that can account for the varied dynamics of potential social identity crises. The development of such an analytical framework shall be the theoretical contribution of this thesis and will be outlined in the next section, along with the empirical one.

Theoretical and empirical contribution

The present thesis contributes both to theoretical and empirical knowledge in the wider areas of identity research, social psychology, national European identities research, and Modern Greek studies. Beginning with the theoretical contribution, as was explained before, the central theoretical purpose of this thesis has been to contribute to *an analytical framework of identity destabilisations*, because such a framework was recognised as being developed insufficiently or not comprehensively

enough in the existing literature. As such, in order to formulate such a systematised framework, a *typology of 'identity destabilisations'* was created. The theorisation of these types drew heavily from SIT, but in order to fill in and enrich theoretical gaps, various other sources were consulted, such as Baumeister *et al.*'s (1985) appropriation of Habermas's political theory, theories of collective narcissism (de Zavala *et al.*, 2009), and Goffman's sociology of stigma (1963). As such, a *bricolage* approach to theorising that eclectically combines insights from multiple theoretical sources (Kincheloe, 2001) was employed and the following typology of identity destabilisations, and their definitions, was created:

- *Identity conflict*: an identity destabilisation induced when a social entity is torn between two or more commitments that are perceived as incompatible and can lead to identity confusion and inconsistency of action.
- *Identity devaluation*: an identity destabilisation inflicted when a social entity's sense of identity is distressed by negative representations, which can lead to diminished self-esteem and low social status.
- *Identity overvaluation*: an identity destabilisation encouraged when a social entity's sense of identity is evaluated in an overtly positive way, which can lead to the development of 'great expectations' and their frustration, or aggression towards outgroups.
- *Identity deficit*: an identity destabilisation observed when a social entity's sense of identity is perceived as missing or severely compromised, which can lead to a disorienting absence of motivation, values and goals.

It is postulated in this thesis that this typology can account for the multiple dynamics of identity crisis phenomena and the complexities of their social dynamics, a claim that is substantiated in the subsequent empirical chapters.

Moving on to the empirical contribution, this thesis contributes by testing this typology by means of a triangulated research design employing the analysis of historiographical, media, and interview data. Furthermore, the production of original interview data with Greek ideational leaders and citizens enriches the existing pool of empirical data on Greek European identities, especially the much smaller pool of such data during the recently enacted economic crisis. Given that most prior investigations on national European identities, including the Greek one, have focused on statistical accounts and Eurobarometer survey data (Cram, 2011), this thesis's highly participatory and qualitative approach provides a platform for the unheard voices of everyday citizens and their stories that remain obscure in survey research (Bruter, 2005). This type of research is argued to be more sensitive to identity processes and what people think is important, rather than what researchers themselves emphasise in their research designs (Thiel, 2016). Finally, since national identities travel in time and are revisited at given intervals, future researchers of longer term cultural changes in Greece related to the crisis may find an asset in this piece of research that tries to capture the state of Greek European identity at this historical moment, situated in a series of past and future such moments. The remaining section will summarise the structure of the thesis.

Structure of thesis

The journey this thesis attempts to take the reader on goes as follows:

Chapter 1 explains the theoretical framework of the thesis. It starts by revisiting the vivid debate on the concept of identity and defends it against its critics. It continues by describing the theoretical 'state of the art' in national and European identities research, and makes the case for social psychology, before moving on to outlining the main assumptions of SIT and SRT. It then elaborates on what is argued to be a 'successful marriage' between the two theories and finally, the chapter sets out this thesis's main theoretical contribution, namely a theoretical framework of potential triggers of identity crisis, in the form of a typology of identity destabilisations.

Chapter 2 describes the research design of this thesis and its aim is to communicate the rationale and planning that was used to answer the research questions. The chapter begins by briefly referring to traditional research designs in social psychology and national and European identities research, and progresses by advocating the merits of a triangulated single case study research design. Data collection processes and fieldwork strategies are fully described and sections on research ethics and analytical approaches and techniques are included.

Chapter 3 to chapter 6 constitute the main body of the thesis and the space where the results of the research are presented. The presentation follows the four types of identity destabilisations and as such, each chapter contains four corresponding sections on identity conflict, identity devaluation, identity overvaluation and identity deficit. Subsections are used to highlight and separate themes under these primary types of identity destabilisations. The chapters are organised on the basis of the data domains that were appropriated to answer the research questions: 1) historiography, 2) media 3) experts, and 4) citizens.

Consequently, chapter 3 explores past historiographical representations of modern Greece and its relation to Europe and the EU in order to elucidate the dominant narratives of Greek European identity over time. This initial exploration serves as a comparative point of reference to chapter 4 which is based on emerging media research on the construction of the Euro crisis and Greece's role within it, as well as analysis of selected media texts that illuminate the representational states of Greek European identities during the economic crisis.

Chapter 5 and 6 takes us to the sphere of newly produced interview data and although they further analyse identity representations, they additionally moves us closer to the psychological experience of identity. Chapter 5 presents the empirical results of interviews held with Greek academics, politicians and journalists, the 'ideational leaders' of our study, while chapter 6 outlines the results of interviews conducted with various Greek citizens as representatives of the wider public that

receives and further constructs expert representations on Greek European identities and crisis events.

Chapter 7 makes up the discussion of the thesis, which aims to deeply deliberate on the ways the research questions were answered. As such, three main sections corresponding to the three research questions pull together and interpret the main themes emanating from the previous chapters. The discussion analyses how this study's empirical results reaffirm or newly inform existing knowledge of Greek European identities specifically, and more widely, collective identities during crisis phenomena.

Finally, the Conclusion reminds the reader of all the destinations visited during the journey by concisely summarising the main features of the thesis. It further evaluates the theoretical and empirical contribution, provides overviews on this study's implications and limitations, and makes some recommendations for future research and policy-making.

Chapter 1

A Social Psychological Approach and a Typology of Identity Destabilisations

'One often hears that a good science should begin by proposing clear and carefully defined concepts. Actually no science, not even the most exact, proceeds in this way. It begins by assembling, ordering and distinguishing phenomena which surprise everyone, because they are disturbing, or exotic, or create a scandal'

(Moscovici, 1998b: 209)

Introduction: in defence of 'troubling' concepts

Although preoccupations with the self and its relation to society have been with us as long as human communities existed and the study of identities has a long and extensive philosophical history (Alcoff, 2003), the term identity was consolidated in academic, journalistic and political vocabulary during the sixties with the identity politics and social movements of the time (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Wetherell, 2010). Since then, studies on identities proliferated, producing countless texts and turning identity into one of the most commonly used theoretical constructs (Vignoles *et al.*, 2012; Wetherell, 2010). As aptly put, 'few concepts have been as generative' (Wetherell, 2010: 3). However, paradoxically, the concept of identity may have become a victim of its own 'success', since it has been as contested as it has been privileged (Vignoles *et al.*, 2012).

Debates about identity as an analytic category have revolved around its validity and usefulness, as well as the question of whether other concepts, such as 'identification' could be used in its place to avoid essentialism (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Hall, 2000; Jenkins, 2014). However, the question of

essentialism concerns the *utilisation* of terms, since no term has essential characteristics *as such* (Jenkins, 2014). Brubaker and Cooper's seminal essay against identity (2000) argues that social analysis needs 'unambiguous terms' and that the concept of identity cannot fulfil its analytical task 'for it is riddled with ambiguity, riven with contradictory meanings, and encumbered by reifying connotation' (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 34). However, there is nothing unambiguous about social life to correspond to equally unambiguous concepts. Most importantly, the authors' unhappiness with 'identity' appears to stem from what is seen as an over-expanded usage of the term that has rendered it meaningless by accounting for too many diverse phenomena. As stated, 'if identity is everywhere, it is nowhere' (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 1).

However, does this mean that we should give up on concepts simply because they have been overused and perhaps even abused in previous research? Does that make the associated phenomena any less real, important or consequential? Identity, most simply defined as 'people's explicit or implicit responses' to the question 'who are you?' (Vignoles *et al.*, 2012: 2) is important for social life and research in various ways. *First*, we cannot avoid bringing ourselves and the sense of who we are in our everyday social life (Goffman, 1956), just like we cannot escape ourselves, even if we wanted to, because we possess self-awareness (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014). *Second*, both social action and interaction depend on people's perception of who they are and who others are, therefore identities regulate the ways we interact with others, as well as how we act in general (Eccles, 2009; Hogg & Vaughan, 2014). *Third*, identities are considered beneficial for both personal well-being and collective action (Bendle, 2002; Chalaniova, 2014). *Fourth*, identity research becomes even more important when identities are found in conditions of crisis, or as is often put, 'in trouble'² (Lawler, 2008).

It is proposed here that the concept of identity is better understood as Gallie's (1956: 169) 'essentially contested concepts... the proper use of which inevitably involves endless disputes about

² See for example, *Gender Trouble* by Butler, 2006; Caldas-Coulthard & Iedema's *Identity Trouble*, 2008; Ochsner's *Lad Trouble*, 2009).

their proper uses on the part of their users'. This should not deter us from researching 'troubling' concepts, because as Hall (2000: 6) argues about such 'irreducible' concepts, although there are widely recognised issues of implied essentialism in any of their uses and we may feel that we can no longer think with them, at the same time key questions of politics and agency cannot be thought of at all without them.

After defending the concept of identity against its critics, the present chapter will provide an overview of prior theoretical traditions in national and European identities research and shall justify the choice of a social psychological approach. It will then move on to present the two main theories that provide the ontological foundations of this thesis, namely *Social Representations Theory* (SRT) and *Social Identity Theory* (SIT), as well as elaborate on their integration and its resulting merits. It is thereby argued that the combination of the insights of these two theories can assist in addressing two fundamental dimensions of identity phenomena: *identity as representation* and *identity as psychological experience*. Ultimately, the final section will demonstrate the inadequacy of previous theories of identity crisis and shall present this study's theoretical contribution towards a more systematic analytical framework in the form of a typology of identity destabilisations that may breed multiple dynamics of identity crises.

National European identities: a social psychological approach

The concept of 'European identity' is traced back to the EU's official documents³. In 1973, the *Declaration on European Identity* (EC, 1973) emphasised the importance of internal European unity in establishing Europe's global role as an agent of peace, democracy and economic development. European identity was next mentioned in the *Maastricht Treaty* (EC, 1992) in the Common Foreign and Security Policy section (Article B, p. 5), indicating that in 1992 the focus was still on Europe's international and institutional identity, rather than its citizens. In 1995, after the suggestion of

³ For extended analyses, see Ivic (2009, 2010); Ivic & Lakicevic (2011).

Vaclav Havel, Czech author and politician, that the EU should ‘com[e] up with a new and genuinely clear reflection on what might be called European identity’, the *Charter of European Identity* (EC, 1995: 1) was drafted. The Charter moved beyond the previous focus on international identity and described Europe with reference to its destiny, values, living standards, economic and social policies and global responsibilities, aiming to stimulate public debate and to make its citizens ‘proud to be Europeans’ (EC, 1995: 8). Most importantly, the Charter argued for a federal structure and recognised the need for citizens’ support and participation as a legitimizing factor for the deepening process of European integration (EC, 1995: 5). After the great enlargements of the two-thousands, the *Udine Declaration* of 2007 addressed issues of regional and cultural identities, multiculturalism and increasing migration (AER, 2007).

The construction of a commonly shared, transnational European identity has long been seen as the ‘political glue’ that would legitimise and sustain the European project (Bruter, 2005; Hermann & Brewer, 2004; Kaina & Karolewski, 2009), by being an antidote to nationalism and Euroscepticism – the latter widely understood as lack of support for European integration (Boomgaarden *et al.*, 2010; Toplak & Šumi, 2012) - and a remedy for a perceived ‘democratic deficit’ induced by the absence of an active ‘European demos’ (Føllesdal & Hix, 2006; Lord, 2007). As such, given the multidimensionality of social identities, according to which social entities occupy multiple social roles (Lawler, 2008; Vignoles *et al.*, 2012), and the normative benefits that are commonly attributed to European identities, such as social cohesion and resilience (Karolewski *et al.*, 2016; Mitchell, 2016), member-states and their citizens are hoped to add an awareness of and attachment to a European dimension of their national identities (Cerutti, 2008; Risse, 2010). Instead of assuming that a European identity will subsume a national one, national and European identities are better understood as intertwined parts of a multidimensional whole, further including regional, local and other identities (Cerutti, 2008; Risse, 2010) ⁴. As such, it is more accurate to speak of a Norwegian

⁴ See for example various identity models like ‘marble cake’ (Risse, 2010) or ‘Russian dolls/nested identities’ (Díez Medrano & Gutiérrez, 2001; Guglielmi, 2016).

European identity, a French European identity or an Austrian European identity, rather than simply Norwegian, French or Austrian, respectively (Guglielmi, 2016; Mummendey & Waldzus, 2004).

In light of the interaction between different identity dimensions, it follows that these are not experienced similarly by all people. For instance, being a 'black woman' does not constitute the same social experience and self-understanding as being a 'white woman' (Lawler, 2008). In this sense, being a Finnish or Polish European can be different from being a Portuguese or German European. As such, within a multicultural continental context such as Europe, European identities are plural and come in 'national colours' (Galpin, 2014; Marcussen *et al.*, 1999). In this respect, there is not one European identity or one Europe, because member-states and their citizens have their own visions, memories, experiences and policies of Europe (Katzenstein & Checkel, 2009). For example, research has indicated that British Euroskepticism is entrenched in Britain's history of empire, German Europeanism demonstrates WWII guilt and Spanish support for European integration acts as a proxy for modernisation and democratisation (Diez Medrano, 2003). As a result, this study's object of inquiry is referred to as 'Greek European identity'.

Similarly to national identities, European identities contain both civic and cultural features, with the first corresponding to political institutions and citizenship and the second referring to a shared geographical area with common history, heritage, culture, memories and myths (Bruter, 2004; Camia, 2010; Vujadinović, 2011). In this regard, a past conceptual confusion has been the interchangeable use of the terms 'Europe' and the 'EU', and as an extension, the lack of separation between an EU-identity, connoting support for the transnational European political institution of the EU, and a cultural European identity that may or may not include EU support (Cram, 2011; Risse, 2004; Sassatelli, 2002). Although the distinction is conceptually important and European identities should not be reduced to the question of support for European integration 'EU-style' (Fakiolas & Fakiolas, 2006; Ivic & Lakicevic, 2011), it is unavoidably recognisable that the EU has established considerable hegemony in defining what being European means (Laffan, 2004; Risse, 2004;

Sassatelli, 2002). As such, adequate theories of national European identities need to take both aspects into account.

European identities research is as expansive as it is complex. We can largely differentiate between three main streams of research, based on their focus: a) European integration research, b) normative theorising, and c) citizens-driven empirical research. The first includes theories of European integration, which are not identity theories as such, but have informed the study of European identities in the past, like functionalism (Mitrany, 1933), neo-functionalism (Haas, 1958; Lindberg, 1963; Schmitter, 1969), federalism (Kull, 2014), inter-governmentalism (Hoffman, 1966; Moravcsik, 1998), transactionalism/communication theory (Deutsch, 1953), historical institutionalism (Aspinwall & Schneider, 2001; Pierson, 1996), multilevel governance (Hooghe & Marks, 2004) and Europeanisation theory (Flockhart, 2010; Olsen, 2002).

The second theoretical area concerns normative theorising about European identities and what Europe/EU should be (Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009; Eder, 2009). These theories include cosmopolitanism (Delanty, 2005), multiculturalism (Lucarelli, 2008), constitutional patriotism (Habermas, 2001), supranational citizenship (Weiler, 1998) and normative power Europe (Manners, 2002). The third stream includes empirical research that is citizens-driven and explores social attitudes, public opinion and everyday practices through various methodological means, such as large-scale statistical, qualitative or experimental methods (Garib & Braun, 2003). This area incorporates a significant part of traditional research on European identities and EU support informed by Eurobarometer data (Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009; Cram, 2011), the EU's surveys conducted twice every year since 1973, but also emerging and intriguing approaches such as transnationalism (Kuhn, 2015; Thiel, 2011), banal Europeanism (Cram, 2001; Heinrich, 2016), and biographical approaches (Lazaroms & Gioielli, 2015; Miller & Day, 2012) that focus on the everyday experiences of European citizens.

All traditions are equally valuable and capable of contributing to the field, since each one focuses on different aspects of the wider identity phenomenon (Vignoles *et al.*, 2012). As such, all three streams of research insightfully grasp diverse articulations of their shared object of national European identities. For instance, the first stream of research on processes of European integration successfully captures the *elite-driven* institutional and governmental character of European identities (Karolewski & Kaina, 2006; Katzenstein & Checkel, 2009). The second stream of theoretical research widely analyses the *ideational* nature of European identity in its multiple interpretations and meanings (Krzyżanowski, 2010; Schimmelfennig, 2012). Finally, the third stream recognises that identities are carried not only by institutions and political elites, but also by everyday citizens, therefore it acknowledges not only their *collective* and shared attributes, but also the *experiential* and lived character of European identities (Miller & Day, 2012). What we can gather from these perspectives is that European identities are elite projects and collective identities that are manifested ideationally and experientially.

In this sense, it becomes apparent that an adequate theory of identity would need to address all these identity features, in which case the question becomes what kind of theoretical approach could accommodate this complex task. After an exploration of the available literature, it was established that the theoretical approach that could capitalise and expand on these prior insights could be located within the field of social psychology. Social psychology has been employed for the study of national European identities in the past with fruitful outcomes that add complexity to prior assumptions (i.e. Breakwell & Lyons, 1996; Castano, 2004; Cinnirella, 1997; Chrysoschoou, 2013). For instance, social psychology indicates that sometimes the more people may identify with Europe, the more they may view it in their own national colours, leading to inter-group conflicts with other Europeans, rather than unification (Mummendey & Waldzus, 2004). The strengths of social psychology are situated in its recognition that communities can have a psychological existence for their members (Castano, 2004), while its collectivist focus can account for the dynamic formation of collective identities (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014), such as European identities.

The two staple theories within social psychology are the *Social Identity Theory* (SIT) of Henri Tajfel and John Turner (1979, 2004) and the *Social Representations Theory* (SRT), developed by Serge Moscovici (2001, 2008). Both theories are cognitivist in nature, in line with social psychology's traditional ontology, whereby social cognition is defined as 'the knowledge, beliefs, thoughts and ideas that people have about themselves and their environment' (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014: 6). A relatively small niche of social psychologists employs varied integrative models of the two theories, demonstrating that their theoretical marriage can be a happy one (i.e. Chryssochoou, 2000a; Elchereth *et al.*, 2011; Howarth, 2002). While SIT provides a firm theoretical grounding on group identity processes, as well as intergroup relations, and illuminates psychological motivations and experiences (Huddy, 2001), SRT complements it by adding clarifications regarding the source domains of beliefs and knowledge regarding the ideational content of social identities (Höijer, 2011). As such, SIT can account for the aforementioned psychological experience of European identities and SRT appears fitting to address their ideational dimension. Furthermore, SRT's focus on expert representations as an elite field of knowledge and influence can assist us in understanding the elite dynamics of European integration. These claims are analysed in more detail in the next section.

[An integrated model of Social Identity Theory and Social Representations Theory](#)

SIT was first formulated by Tajfel (1959, 1963, 1969) in the context of his research on stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. According to SIT, humans have two fundamental psychological needs: certainty and positiveness (Hymans, 2002). In this respect, when it comes to identity formation, people need to define themselves and others through *categorisation*, and to enjoy positive self-esteem through *self-enhancement* (Hogg *et al.*, 1995; Tajfel, 1981; Turner, 1985). As far as collective identities are concerned, individuals may derive positive self-esteem from formal membership or emotional attachment to various social groups and collectivities (Fowler & Kam, 2007). The belief that specific social qualities correlate to particular identity categories are *stereotypes* (Hogg &

Williams, 2000). Cognitively speaking, a stereotype can be understood as a social *schema*, that is, ‘a cognitive structure that represents knowledge about a concept or type of stimulus, including its attributes and the relations among those attributes’ (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014: 49).

People have schemas about everything: persons, groups, roles, events (scripts), themselves (self-schemas) (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014: 50-51). Such ideas have a normative character since they dictate appropriate rules of conduct depending on category membership, therefore people can have group *self-stereotypes* and collective self-schemas (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014; Stets & Burke, 2003). Some group members may be considered more of a *prototype* compared to other members because they are perceived to embody the group norms more successfully (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, 1985). This creates the possibility for the creation of ‘internal others’, liminal members that are part of the group, yet conceived as not fully deserving to belong or assigned a second-class status. Within the context of European integration and the existence of a *superordinate* European identity that acts as an umbrella identity comprising multiple *subordinate* national identities⁵, we may anticipate that European citizens have stereotypes of other Europeans and of themselves, as well as prototypes of the ideal European (Chrysoschoou, 2000a).

Tajfel (1981) argues that a full theory of identity should be contextualised in the social milieu that individuals occupy and their social interactions, and should address issues of justification, causal attribution and social differentiation. As such, SIT is a theory of intergroup relations and social conflict, since it postulates that individuals partition the world into *ingroups* and *outgroups* and struggle to achieve positive collective distinctiveness through social comparison with outgroups (Brewer & Brown, 1998; Fowler & Kam, 2007). Comparisons are psychologically encouraged by the drives of uncertainty due to the lack of an objective measure of reality, and the quest for self-evaluation which can be directed either upwards or downwards (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014). While

⁵ This is not to be confused with the meaning of the word ‘subordinate’ as inferior and disadvantaged. In this case the terms ‘superordinate’ and ‘subordinate’ are used to denote levels of order, rather than comment on the nature of the relationship, resembling the ‘nested identities’ model, i.e. smaller identities within larger ones.

upwards comparisons can be detrimental to the self-esteem, downwards comparisons can result in positive self-schemas (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014). Social comparison may sometimes lead to ingroup favouritism and outgroup derogation (Brewer & Brown, 1998; Fowler & Kam, 2007; Greene, 2004). This creates the possibility that intergroup relations may become antagonistic or acrimonious leading to social bias, prejudice, negative stereotyping and discrimination. But where do stereotypical conceptions of social groups come from, how are prototypes created? This is where SRT and its analysis of representational formations of identities and the ways they relate to human cognition can complement SIT in productive and meaningful ways.

SRT was first elaborated by Serge Moscovici (2008) with his seminal work on the diffusion of psychoanalytical knowledge in Parisian society. SRT is a theory that belongs to a social constructionist ontology and the wider area of discursive psychology (Flick, 1998; Moscovici, 1998b; Potter & Edwards, 1999). Both social constructionism and discursive psychology have acted as critiques to traditional strictly cognitivist and positivist social psychology (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014; de Rosa, 2006). Discursive psychology is an approach to psychology that assumes the importance of the action-oriented and reality-constructing features of discourse and concentrates on how 'reality' is actively constructed by people conceptually in language (Potter & Edwards, 2001). Discourse is defined as 'talk and texts studied as social practices' (Potter & Edwards, 2001: 104). This focus is part of social psychology's shift towards language, situated in the wider 'linguistic turn' in the social sciences, whereby language is understood as 'the epitome of a social variable [because] it is socially constructed and internalised to govern individual social cognition and behaviour' (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014: 25). This constructionist focus of SRT can fill in the gaps of SIT by illuminating how stereotypical and prototypical ideas are formed (Chrysoschoou, 2000a).

In his seminal essay on the 'need for identity', Hall (2000) maintains that the link between the *discursive/representational* with the *psychic/psychological* is one of the fundamental and most difficult issues to understand in identity research. In his view, it is precisely in this intersection

between the symbolic order of representation and the formation of the social identity that conceptual challenges emerge because of the interaction of the individual psychic identity and the social order (Hall, 2000). Regardless, we need to attempt to answer these critical and ‘troubling’ questions of identity (Hall, 2000) and the combination of SRT and SIT can help us achieve this task, with the first addressing the discursive/representational and the second focusing on the psychic/psychological. This is how their theoretical integration can address the aforementioned dual character of identity as both an idea/representation and a psychological experience.

In light of SRT’s insights, we can appreciate that national European identities are ‘shared representations of a collective self as reflected in public debate, political symbols, collective memories, and elite competition for power’ (Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009: 4). Simultaneously, the EU itself is a ‘social representation’ of a ‘relatively new and quite technical idea that has its roots in complex economic matters such as free trade and subsidies’ (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014: 104). In this respect, it has been argued that for the EU to achieve collective identifications, positive representations need to be established (Castano, 2004). In terms of crises, our age has been characterised as one that is always at the verge of upcoming catastrophes induced by either social, environmental or technological causes (see also *Risk Society*, Beck, 1992; O’Connor, 2012). However, in order for crises to be perceived as crises they need to be represented as such (Galpin, 2014), while their meaning is socially constructed, instead of a naturally given one (Clarke & Newman, 2010; Jaspal *et al.*, 2014; O’Connor, 2012).

Moscovici gives multiple definitions of ‘representation’ (i.e. 1973: xiii; 1988: 214), but the important thing to bear in mind is that, ontologically speaking, the term ‘representation’ is not meant to connote ‘Reality’ since this is directly impenetrable and debates on its status will always be ongoing, as they should be. Instead, as Pitkin (1967: 8) explains on her seminal work on the *Concept of Representation*, ‘representation... means the making present in some sense of something which is nevertheless not present literally or in fact’. In this sense, precisely because we cannot directly

observe social reality, due to its irreducible lack of closure, we constantly make multiple and diverse *re-presentations* of it, an endless mediation that constitutes the 'paradoxical' nature of representations of being and not being simultaneously (Judge, 1999; Näsström, 2006; Pitkin, 1967).

Moscovici (2008) investigated how specialised, expert knowledge became 'common-sense', every day, and consensual beliefs through media communication. Such ideas make it possible for humans to classify, compare and explain individuals, groups and situations (Moscovici, 1988). As such, social representations concern the accumulated shared knowledge, the collection of floating discourses that circulate in a given social context, that provide a set of constructed 'objects' for interpretation, be it an identity category or a situation. For Moscovici (1984: 24), this process is psychologically prompted by the human need 'to make something unfamiliar... familiar', to arrest meaning and provide certainty, which is achieved by associating new phenomena with previous well-known phenomena, a process called *anchoring*, or solidifying their meaning by grounding it in specific objects, images or concepts, a function called *objectification*.

In these processes, anchoring entails drawing 'something' out of its anonymity into the 'identity matrix of our culture' (Moscovici, 2000: 46) and providing it with a 'name', which is a highly political activity and may contain both positive and negative consequences. Additionally, anchoring to pre-existing representations may explain the considerable stability of some identities that persist in time and in content (Huddy, 2001). In more detail, anchoring may entail any of the following mechanisms: naming, emotional anchoring, thematic anchoring, metaphoric anchoring or anchoring via basic antinomies (Höijer, 2011). Objectification concerns the 'discovery', the allocation of an 'iconic quality' to an otherwise imprecise or confusing idea (Moscovici, 1984: 38). There can be various sub-processes associated with objectification, such as personification, figuration, and ontologisation (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014). Personification relates the abstract object to a person, while figuration concerns the process whereby an abstract object is dominated by metaphorical imagery, which renders it more psychologically and culturally accessible (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014). Finally, ontologisation refers to

the process of attributing physical characteristics to nonphysical entities, essentially 'materialising the immaterial' (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014: 5).

Moscovici (1988) further distinguished between three types of social representations: *hegemonic*, *emancipated*, and *polemic*. Hegemonic representations are shared consensually by members of a group and can be coercive, uniform and as a consequence, potentially more influential and difficult to reconstruct or reject (Breakwell, 2001). Emancipated representations are advanced by subgroups within a larger social collectivity as a result of outgrowths of information and distinctive knowledge within these subgroups (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014). These representations are often minor amendments of overarching hegemonic representations. Finally, polemic representations are produced in the context of social conflict and are characterised by antagonistic relations between groups (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014). This kind of representations relate to SIT's postulate of intergroup conflict and mutual stereotyping.

SRT complements SIT by providing a theorisation of the creation of representations of stereotypes and prototypes (Chrysoschoou, 2000b), which is the fruitful link between the two theories. Additionally, SRT provides SIT with a critical edge, since as argued (Elcheroth *et al.*, 2011: 730), SRT's focus on language and meaning formation can address 'the nature of power, and how it relates to political reasoning, communication and social influence, conformity and resistance, collective harmony and group conflict'. As Moscovici (1998a: 377) explains, in every representation there is both cooperation and conflict: cooperation because the representation itself gives us a common object and code to discuss social reality, conflict because we may disagree about this reality. As put, 'there is a kind of ideological battle, a battle of ideas' (Moscovici, 1998a: 403).

Moscovici's interest was on specialised knowledge and the ways its terms and narratives disseminate in the wider society to become integral parts of the social realm. In the case of 'national European identities' and 'economic crisis', terms such as 'nation', 'Europe', 'identity', 'economy' and 'crisis' are often specialised terms that are primarily and systematically framed, negotiated and

communicated by expert professionals. As argued (Mackridge, 2010: 9), identity is ‘an intellectual concept that is often expressed, analysed and debated chiefly by members of cultural and political elites’. Modernist and constructivist approaches do not view national identity as an archaic phenomenon or a natural human essence, but as socially constructed and often emphasise the role of political leaders and nationally enamoured ‘cultural activists’ who appropriate and invent identity narratives for nation state-building purposes and other political purposes (Blum, 2007; Smith, 2002). The historical production and continuous reproduction of national identities have long been understood as distinctly elite-driven projects, while the same has been said about European identities (Katzenstein & Checkel, 2009; Risse, 2004; Smith, 2002). As argued (Katzenstein & Checkel, 2009), national and European identities need to be understood as top-down political projects developed by political elites and identity entrepreneurs in national governments and in Brussels.

Although Moscovici in his original study looked at the influence of the scientific community, in this study a wider approach to the term ‘expert’ is followed. Instead of only focusing on social scientists that define the meanings of the aforementioned terms that are the focus of our study, professionals from various fields that systematically engage with the elucidation of these terms are incorporated in the category of the ‘experts’. As such, this group can open up to include not only social scientists, but also political elites, policy makers, journalists and authors. SRT’s ultimate goal is to compare the representations made by ‘experts’ and ‘non-experts’, a task often ignored in prior research that only looks at representations in one of these two domains (i.e. O’Connor, 2012). It is frequently the case that non-experts are called ‘lay people’ in studies (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014; O’Connor, 2012), but in this study this term will be avoided due to its negative connotations that imply ignorance and lack of sophistication. Instead non-experts will simply be called ‘citizens’ because ordinary people can be said to be ‘experts’ *of their own experience*, which is accepted here as an equally valid and valuable ‘form of knowledge’ to expert knowledge. Experts themselves are called in this study ‘ideational leaders’ (Stiller, 2010). Stiller’s use of the term stands for ‘leadership with the help of ideas’ (2010:

17) and as a consequence, for the ways political leaders are themselves influenced by ideas, while simultaneously being in a position to influence their construction.

However, although this integrated theoretical model of SIT and SRT is evaluated to be useful for the study of identities, an elaborate and systematic analytical framework of identity destabilisations is not adequately found in their midst. As such, questions arise regarding what is an 'identity crisis', how does it function and whether there are multiple and complex dimensions of this phenomenon. Although SIT can illuminate some aspects of identities in crisis, such as threat resulting from stereotyping or intergroup conflict, and SRT can help us understand that identity crises are in themselves a matter of representations, it is argued here that a more systematised analytical framework of identity destabilisations, potentially leading to 'crises' of the identity, is needed. The following section outlines one such framework and constitutes the analytical contribution of this thesis.

Theorising 'identity crisis'

Prior theories and their discontents

It is argued in this thesis that although we have become accustomed to hearing about 'identity crises' in conditions of postmodernity and globalisation (Bendle, 2002; Dunn, 1998; Lawler, 2008), systematic analytical frameworks of identity destabilisations possibly promoting identity crises are rather scarce, and when found, they prove to be underdeveloped or one-dimensional (Baumeister *et al.*, 1985). Furthermore, just like the term 'identity', 'identity crisis' appears to be used extensively, yet loosely and not always in line with a systematic analytical framework (Bendle, 2002; Brubaker & Cooper, 2000), which results in its status as a flashy punchline, rather than a theorisation of identity crisis phenomena. The most elaborate theoretical framework of 'identity crisis' *as such*, is found in Erik Erikson's (1968, 1970) developmental psychology of ego-identity and identity statuses (Marcia, 1966) that account for the passage of adolescents to adulthood and the clarification of social roles,

thus resolution of youth identity crises, especially of late adolescence which imposes life choices on individuals.

However, a theory designed for the study of aging transitions of individuals does not appear fit to address collective identities, such as national European ones, since neither the nation, nor Europe or the EU are adolescents in transition. There is indeed a recognisable developmental narrative in the literature regarding 'young nations' that have failed to modernise (i.e. Sotiropoulos, 2010) and overcome what Landes in his seminal book on Western European industrialisation (2003: 357) calls 'the puberty of nations, the passage that separates the men from the boys' marking the transition towards achieving industrialisation and economic and political development. These accounts are subject to the evolutionary and teleological understanding of history, economy and politics (Demertzis, 1997; Tsakalotos, 2008), and could find their theoretical and even terminological correspondence in identity research. However, an application of an Eriksonian evolutionary notion of 'identity crisis' for the study of nations would be highly metaphorical and ontologically, thus epistemologically, flawed, since individuals are distinct entities from collectivities, institutions and organisations.

Erikson's theory is derived by the wider theoretical tradition of psychoanalysis, an approach that more widely touches upon the question of 'identity crisis' through its assumption of eternal 'lack' of the self (the *subject*) and its endless struggle to fill in the emptiness of this psychic void (Lacan, 1994; Stavrakakis, 2002a). Although psychoanalysis offers remarkable and rich theoretical insights for the study of identity and its crisis (i.e. Horowitz, 2014; Strenger, 2005), it is argued in this thesis that its application in empirical and participatory research imposes significant ontological and epistemological issues.

First, to begin with, psychoanalytical inquiry was originally and primarily designed for the therapeutic needs and clinical purposes of psychotherapy, not those of empirical social research (Mitchell & Black, 2016). As such, it was not originally 'cut-out' to fully facilitate the relationship

between researcher and researched. *Second*, the unavoidable implication of this relation assumes a dual role for the researcher, as psychotherapist and researcher, which risks pathologising research participants and disturbs the already fragile balance of power between researcher and researched (Aldridge, 2015). *Third*, the most intractable problem of applied psychoanalytical research resides in the question of the ‘unconscious’, the basis of all psychoanalysis (Fonagy, 2006), which can be a rather ‘elusive and unlocatable’ element (Ffytche, 2016: 14). *Fourth*, the very assumption of the researcher/psychoanalyst, hence occupier of the role of the ‘knower’ being more knowledgeable of another’s inner psyche and unconscious thoughts and desires further problematises the aforementioned power imbalance between researcher and researched because of the projections involved (Aldridge, 2015; Fonagy, 2006). *Fifth*, the extensive use of metaphor in psychoanalysis (Wurmser, 1977) sometimes fails to account for its own cultural constructs and their political implications (i.e. gender equality as ‘penis envy’, Buhle, 1998).

Psychoanalysis is often part of two wider theoretical traditions that place ‘identity crisis’ in a central role, namely postmodernism and poststructuralism (Kuspit, 2002). As argued by postmodernists, we now live in ‘post-modern’ times, where the securities and certainties of the modern past with its consolidated social identities no longer apply and globalisation fragments the fragile ego of the post-modern individual (Bendle, 2002; Dunn, 1998). Post-modern theorists have good reasons to assume that postmodernity fragments the sense of identity, if only for the expansion of possibility, choice and complexity (Andrews, 2016; Dunn, 1998). However, the question of identity is often consumed in an endless debate between essentialist notions and constructivist/constructionist versions, whether thin or thick ones (Bendle, 2002).

Moreover, postmodernism often ends up recycling its own paradox of arguing that no identity exists, nor should it ever exist, yet at the same time, expressing deep nostalgia for that which never is (Kuspit, 2002). It is argued here that this approach to identity and theorising is less than fruitful, since it reproduces the same polarisations repeatedly, while postmodernism’s assumption of an

ever-present 'crisis of identity' deprives us of an object of observation. Similarly to the aforementioned 'ubiquity of identity' (Bendle, 2002: 2), if identity crisis itself is everywhere, then it is nowhere. Instead, it is suggested in this study that we should focus on a few minimal standards that can account for the existence of identity and its crises, so that an analytical framework of identity destabilisations, potentially triggering such crises, can be crafted more systematically.

Defining identity and triggers of identity crisis

In order to define 'identity crisis', we should first define 'identity' and then 'crisis', as well as potential triggers of crisis. In this thesis, it is accepted that identity is derived from two particular premises: 1) self-awareness and 2) sense of trajectory. These two are concisely captured by Giddens's definition of identity as 'the self as reflexively understood by the individual in terms of his or her biography' (1991: 244). The first one refers to social psychology's assumption that humans have an awareness of themselves, which constitutes their sense of self (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014; Pyszczynski *et al.*, 2010). This sense of self may not always be clear or positive, hence its destabilisations, but it nevertheless always resides in a certain 'reflexive consciousness' (Pyszczynski *et al.*, 2010: 737). This needs not be a core, Cartesian, inner self that is concretely fixed and consistently rational, neither an overtly fragmented and utterly indecisive self (Bendle, 2002). Instead, it merely refers to the fact that most people would be capable to state at least a few things about themselves with a relative degree of certainty, based on the perception of themselves (Giddens, 1991). Self-awareness, especially if understood as self-knowledge, has been criticised for assuming an overtly optimistic view of human reflexivity (Bendle, 2002), therefore it would be more accurate to specify that humans, at the very least, have 'the *capacity for* awareness' of self and others (Pyszczynski *et al.*, 2010: 737). Just like the unfixed 'self', this capacity is similarly not fixed, since it can be highly malleable and trainable to allow for greater, or lesser thereof, 'cognitive flexibility' (Hirsh & Kang, 2016).

Second, humans' sense of identity is derived from an awareness of their trajectory over time, which is based on memory and concerns the understanding of one's biography (Giddens, 1991). In collective identities, such as national European ones, biography is substituted by history, or more accurately a historicizing representation of identity, defined as 'stimulation of temporal thought' (Knight & Steward, 2016: 2). Just like history and its writing (-graphy, *γραφη*) are always subject to representation-making and interpretation (Liakos & Kouki, 2015), similarly one's biography is dependent on personal representations and interpretations of life events (Strauss, 1995). Sometimes collective historical representations may inform personal identities, and vice versa (Strauss, 1995). This awareness is empirically demonstrated by the fact that most people could readily speak about such experiences and attribute a degree of sequence and meaning to their biographical path or their group's temporal trajectory. This path is not to be understood as 'continuity of self' (Bendle, 2002: 7), or a linear and teleological progression to a fuller, more complete self (Leccardi, 2005), but rather as a kind of *temporality*, defined as 'time as it manifests in human existence' (Couzens in Hammer, 2011: 2). This temporality concerns the ways humans project their social identities, whether individual biographies or collective histories, upon time as 'past, present and future' (Knight & Steward, 2016; Leccardi, 2005). As put by Said, 'we read biography not to deconstruct, but to solidify identity, and where but in temporality does an identity unfold?' (2000: 463). Similarly, history is read – and written – to shape collective memory, hence identity, over time.

Subsequently, we need to consider the meaning of 'crisis' and its application to 'identity'. Considering the etymology of the word 'crisis', its origins are found in the ancient Greek word *krinein*, meaning *to decide*, although its meanings are multiple (Agrafiadis, 2013; Bakar, 2015). *First*, 'crisis' most often carries negative connotations and refers to a state of sudden disruption of what was, thus far, considered 'normal' and 'functional' (Agrafiadis, 2013), 'exposure to a traumatic or dangerous event' (Brown *et al.*, 2003: 432) and subjection to conditions of confusion, uncertainty and disorientation (Colman, 2015; Stevenson, 2010). Due to these negative associations, crisis is often understood as highly dramatic, distressing and troubling (Bakar, 2015; Brown *et al.*, 2003;

Kennedy, 2010). *Second*, ‘crisis’ often refers to ‘turning points’ or ‘critical junctures’ (Bakar, 2015; Galpin, 2014), understood as ‘change and transition’ (Dalakoglou & Vradis, 2011: 14) that can either lead to resolution or collapse (Baldick, 2015; Martin, 2015). The ensuing change is often understood to result from the inability of older coping strategies and paradigms to continue providing solutions (Brown *et al.*, 2003; Martin & McFerran, 2014). *Third*, ‘crisis’ also means ‘judgement’ and ‘decision’ (Dalakoglou & Vradis, 2011), which relates to the ways critical moments may urgently need ‘good judgement’, defined as ‘the precise diagnosis of problems of personal or collective life, the assessment of alternative solutions, the selection of intelligent strategies to face a multiplicity of obstacles of organised action’ (Agrafiadis, 2013: v-vi).

The common denominator of the above definitions appears to be the *destabilising* character of crisis as a product of either disruption, change or decision (Dunn, 1998). As such, in the case of identity, ‘identity crisis’ can be defined as the potential product of the *destabilisation*, thus the state of *psychological disequilibrium* of a given identity (Brown *et al.* 2003; Martin & McFerran, 2014)⁶. Based on the two defining pillars of identity, self-awareness and sense of trajectory, an identity crisis would be defined by the destabilisation of this self-awareness and sense of trajectory. Since according to SIT, identity is derived by group membership and is forged in the preservation of collective self-esteem, a destabilisation of membership or self-esteem could foster an identity crisis. Furthermore, a possible inability to employ successful strategies of self-esteem maintenance as SIT purports may indicate a deeper identity crisis. Going back to SRT and the ways identities are inaccessible, therefore are understood and experienced through representations, the same should apply to the crises of identities. In this sense, since the ‘identity crisis’ cannot be defined with absolute ‘objective criteria’, it is the ‘interpretations a society gives to its experiences that govern the extent to which it enters into an identity crisis’ (Pye in Waxman, 2006: 13). As put (Bakar, 2015: 281), an identity crisis is experienced as a ‘crisis of perceptions’ (cognition) and a ‘crisis of ideas’ (representations).

⁶ The term ‘identity destabilisation’ evokes similar terms, such as ‘identity dislocation or decentering’ (Hall, 1996: 597; Laclau in *ibid*), or even ‘displacement’ or ‘disembedding’ (Hall, 1996: 597, 622).

Multiplicity of identity destabilisations: a typology

It is well accepted today that identities are multiple, since individuals simultaneously hold multiple social roles (Hirsh & Kang, 2016; Hooghe & Marks, 2009; Vignoles *et al.*, 2012). Although there is an ontological and terminological debate in the literature whether people have single identities with multiple domains and components, or multiple identities as such (Vignoles *et al.*, 2012), it would be more accurate to say that people have one identity that is enriched and complexified by *multiple identity dimensions* that constantly and dynamically interact with each other to variably make up the totality of one's identity at different temporal intervals (Ntampoudi, 2015). For example, within a SIT tradition, individuals can have multiple group identities (or group identity dimensions) that shift in salience depending on context (Vignoles *et al.*, 2012). In light of this, it would be fair to assume that if identities are multiple, their ascents to crises may be multiple too (Ntampoudi, 2015). In this sense, assuming that identities are plural and multidimensional, it follows that this dynamism should equally be present in their destabilisation, in which case we would need a typology of multiple identity destabilisations to fully understand the phenomenon at hand.

Although the theoretical combination of SRT/SIT successfully grasps some significant aspects of the phenomena of crisis and identity, such as 'identity threat' based on stereotyping and strategies of 'identity threat management' (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014), social psychology still necessitates a systematic analytical framework of identity destabilisations that can account for multiple dynamics of entering, or not thereof, an identity crisis. Consequently, in order to formulate such a systematised framework of crisis triggers, *a typology of identity destabilisations* was created. Following a *bricolage* approach to theorisation, which allows for the combination of multiple sources (Kincheloe, 2001), this typology imports extensively from Tajfel and Turner's SIT, but also fills in theoretical gaps and enriches the conceptual landscape with input from various other sources, such as Baumeister *et al.*'s (1985) appropriation of Habermas's political theory, theories of collective

narcissism (de Zavala *et al.*, 2009), and Goffman's sociology of stigma (1963). The typology consists of four types of identity destabilisation, namely 1) identity conflict, 2) identity devaluation, 3) identity overvaluation, and 4) identity deficit. Their definitions are synthesised as follows:

- *Identity conflict*: an identity destabilisation induced when a social entity is torn between two or more identity dimensions that are perceived as incompatible and can lead to identity confusion and inconsistency of action.
- *Identity devaluation*: an identity destabilisation inflicted when a social entity's identity is distressed by negative representations, which can lead to diminished self-esteem and low social status.
- *Identity overvaluation*: an identity destabilisation manifested when a social entity's identity is evaluated in an overtly positive way, which can lead to the development of unrealistic ingroup expectations and their frustration, or ingroup favouritism and aggression towards outgroups.
- *Identity deficit*: an identity destabilisation observed when a social entity's identity is perceived as missing or severely compromised, which can lead to absence of motivation, values and goals.

The analytical framework of identity destabilisations in the form of the present typology was created in two main episodes during the research, before the analysis of media and interview data. During the first stages of this research project, the social psychological theories of SRT and SIT acted as the sole and central theoretical illumination and guidance, particularly their theoretical merging. The two theories offer rich and clear insights into the workings of social representations of social phenomena and the functions of social identity formation, as they are foundational and well-

established traditions within European social psychology (Prislin & Crano, 2012). As a result, at first, the theoretical focus was on the integration of SRT and SIT.

As a starting point, SIT explains in an elaborate manner the social conditions of stereotyping and prejudice and asserts that these are conditions under which 'identity threats' are constituted (Bilewicz & Kofta, 2011; Pagliaro *et al.*, 2012). For the purposes of this research on 'collective identity crisis' during economic crises, these 'identity threats' were treated as potential triggers of 'identity crises' and as forms of identity destabilisation. During the literature review of SIT, it was felt that the social dynamics of identity destabilisation upon which SIT is most strongly focused are those of identity degradation through negative stereotyping and discrimination via ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation. As such, it was concluded that SIT mostly contributes to the elucidation of what is called in this research 'identity devaluation'. Consequently, at the start, the focus of this research revolved mainly around this particular identity dynamic.

However, during the literature review on the historical construction of Greek European identity, as well as on its construction in media and political discourse during the economic crisis, it intuitively became apparent that there were multiple, distinct and complex dynamics involved in the wider phenomenon of identity destabilisation, besides the devaluing negative stereotyping emphasised in SIT. These included, for example, representations of identity hybridism and conflict, constructed clashes of different identity dimensions of the same identity (i.e. between the 'Greek' and the 'European' components within the total 'Greek European identity'), ideas of struggles over national self-affirmation and sovereignty, implying the loss of international identity, varied dynamics of defensive nationalisms and Europeanisms, coloured by overvaluing tendencies of the objects of 'nation' and 'Europe', and so on.

To be sure, SIT is not blind to these multiple social identity dynamics of conflict, overvaluation and deficit, since it does speak of intergroup relations, possibly even conflict, and assumes the existence of superordinate groups (Costarelli, 2009; Sapountzis & Condor, 2013) or addresses revaluating

strategies of 'identity threat management' (Pagliaro *et al.*, 2012). However, the central axis around which SIT is formed is the question of group 'self-esteem', hence the overt focus on identity degradation/threat. This emphasis holds it back from expanding more thoroughly on the other types of identity destabilisations and potential crises, as well as from explicitly naming them and clarifying not only their distinct character, but also complex intersections. As a result, the second episode in the development of the present analytical and typological framework was the expansion of the theoretical review into additional sources that could complement and refine the original theoretical and terminological territory, through the bricolage approach.

The literature was scouted for definitions of 'identity crises' and social psychologists Baumeister *et al.*'s (1985) text on 'two kinds of identity crisis' assisted in understanding the potential existence of 'identity conflicts' and 'identity deficits'. For these authors, identity conflicts and identity deficits are two types of 'identity crisis', rather than 'identity threats', as termed by SIT. As becomes apparent, terminological issues arise when looking at diverse sources, but ultimately the terminological decision-making rests upon the researcher's personal interpretation, subjective judgement and his or her research objectives, since terms themselves have no objective or essential meaning as such and are a matter of usage and operationalisation. In this research, these 'threats' or 'crises' are treated as identity destabilisations that could promote identity crisis. Baumeister *et al.*'s theorisations expanded the analytical framework to include the types of identity conflict and deficit, on top of the devaluation already proclaimed by SIT. The final identity destabilisation that was added to the framework was that of overvaluation, which became particularly necessary as the historical review of Greek European identity was revealing constructions of Greek identity in idealising, overvaluing ways during, for instance, the age of Philhellenism.

As an additional step within the development of the analytical framework, it was sensed that not only devaluation and overvaluation may be especially linked, as already implied by SIT's assumption of identity threat management, but that there might be gradations and qualitative differences of

social devaluations and overvaluations. In order to elucidate this the literature was consulted again and the distinction between 'stereotype threat' and 'stigma threat' became useful (Biernat & Dovidio, 2003), at which point Goffman's seminal theoretical work on stigma (1963) also became relevant. It was intuitively felt that overvaluation functions in a similar fashion, whereby the existing distinction within the literature between 'self-protection' and 'self-advancement' (Sedikides & Gregg, 2008) and theories of 'collective narcissism' (de Zavala *et al.*, 2009) became the final touch of the analytical framework. Retrospectively, there might be gradations and qualitative differences of identity conflicts and deficits, but these were not clarified during this research and remain to be possibly developed in the future.

After the full typology was developed on the basis of reviewing and expanding the net of literature sources, as well as refining concepts and terms, the four types were then used to examine the information coming out of the empirical data (texts and interviews). The empirical data rendered more specific the ways that these different destabilising identity dynamics operate within the context and special parameters of the case study of 'Greek European identity'. These special parameters concern not only the case of Greece, but also the category case of 'national European identity' as a distinct compound social identity among multiple social identity categories. As such, the empirical data fleshed out and illustrated how the conceptual model resonated – or not thereof – with the opinions and experiences of social actors, whether experts or non-experts. This was not meant as a positivist strategy of theory-testing and falsification (Popper, 1959), but rather as a strategy of creating a dialogue between theoretical constructs and empirical ones.

With reference to the continuum of inductive and deductive research (Rothchild, 2006), the present research may appear to be rather deductive as there was considerable theoretical input and analytical development prior to the empirical analysis of textual and interview material (Harding, 2013). It is a common misconception in the literature that qualitative research can only be inductive (i.e. grounded theory approach), but it can also be deductively approached if research aims and

questions are specific enough (Harding, 2013). The theoretical specification within a particular identity research tradition - in this case, social psychology's SIT/SRT and crafted typology of identity destabilisations – was necessary for shaping the terminological universe of the project and providing a vocabulary for the phenomena involved, a choice which contains the deductive elements of the research process.

However, the distinction between the two logics of research-doing are more ideo-typical (Weber, 1922) and schematic (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014), rather than an 'either/or' proposition, since in applied research the constant passage from induction to deduction, and vice versa, is not only the practiced, but also the desired norm. As aptly put, 'ever since Aristotle it has been accepted that there exists a combination of inductive and deductive reasoning and a sort of unified inductive-deductive methodology' (Stadler, 2004: 1).

Accordingly, although the present research project was highly specified theoretically from its earlier stages, the original framing of the research topic as an 'identity project' - in itself a 'research hypothesis' and an 'empirical question' assuming the possible relevance of identity for the economic crisis - was specified through informal personal observations of the present researcher. These observations were influenced not only by the researcher's social identity as a Greek European living abroad in another EU member-state, exposed to media representations, political discourse and social interactions, but also by the researcher's prior training as a political sociologist. These are elements of inductive thinking, since induction begins with observation. As explained (Bendassoli, 2013), it becomes difficult to differentiate clearly in practice between the two scientific reasonings and pin down where induction ends and deduction begins, since researchers are influenced by prior knowledge, expectations and experiences. In this sense, there is no such thing as 'pure' induction or 'pure' deduction (Ormston *et al.*, 2014: 6). Conclusively, both logics were followed during the research process to varying degrees.

The next sections will elaborate on the distinctions between the four types of identity destabilisations.

Identity conflict

Beginning with *identity conflict*, according to SIT, social identities are associated with normative standards for thought and action and individuals adhere to group social norms because they wish to be conceived as valued members of a group (Hirsh & Kang, 2016). However, given the increasing complexity of the social world, individuals occupy multiple social group identities simultaneously (Hirsh & Kang, 2016). Similarly, in the context of European integration, European citizens occupy both national and European identities. If these groups are perceived to provide divergent norms and values, individuals may experience social identity conflict (Baumeister *et al.*, 1985; Hirsh & Kang, 2016). Identity conflict is defined as ‘perceived incompatibilities between two or more of an individual’s identity domains’ (Hirsh & Kang, 2016: 223). The clash of two or more commitments that are seen as incompatible can entail inconsistent action, which may include the inability of the social entity to fulfil demands and expectations placed on itself or to justify actions that are called for (Baumeister *et al.*, 1985).

These identity conflicts may be due to transitional stages from one identity to another, whereby both identities coexist and their respective values clash with each other (Baumeister *et al.*, 1985; Yoon, 2015). The degree to which an individual may experience identity conflict depends on the value placed on the respective identity dimensions and the depth of the perceived incompatibility between them (Hirsh & Kang, 2016). In the case of national European identities, identity conflict is dependent on the degree that these two identity dimensions, the national and the European, are understood as compatible (Fuchs *et al.*, 2011; Grad, 2002). Identity conflict may be overcome through a variety of identity management strategies (Hirsh & Kang, 2016). Hirsh and Kang (2016) propose four ways of identity conflict resolution: 1) suppressing a conflicting identity, 2) enhancing a

dominant identity, 3) avoiding or denying the identity conflict, and 4) integrating the conflicting identity.

Identity devaluation

Regarding the second type, *identity devaluation* can either refer to SIT's *stereotypes* as 'identity threat' (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) or Goffman's *stigma* as 'spoiled identity' (1963). In this way, we can differentiate between diverse gradations of identity devaluation, with SIT's identity threat being operationalised for types of devaluations, such as negative stereotypes, whereby the identity is threatened and securitised, but perhaps not entirely damaged or severely 'spoiled'. This distinction between 'stereotype threat' and 'stigma threat' may depend on people's attitudes towards stereotypes in general, the particular stereotype content, and the ways cultural context defines that content to determine its psychological and social consequences (Hogg & Williams, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Distinguishing between the interrelated terms 'stereotype' and 'stigma' is important (Biernat & Dovidio, 2003), not only because they are frequently used interchangeably in the literature, but also because stereotypes are complex representations. For example, stereotypes can also be positive, although their content can be equally patronising and their consequences similarly detrimental to those of negative stereotypes (Cheryan & Bodenhausen, 2000; Czopp, 2008). As such, ironically, the 'common-sense' understanding of stereotypes as negative only, is in itself, stereotypical.

Regarding SIT's identity threat, the theory postulates that people derive parts of their self-concept and self-esteem by formal or informal membership in various groups (Pagliaro *et al.*, 2012; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). When a group identity is credited a lower social status, group members may experience an identity threat, that is, the collective self-esteem founded in their group identity may become precarious and unstable (Costarelli, 2009; Martiny & Kessler, 2014). As explained by SRT, this identity threat may result from negative identity representations of this group, amounting to

negative stereotyping (Howarth, 2002; Staerklé *et al.*, 2011; Wagner *et al.*, 2009). Identity threats may not only lead to diminished self-esteem, but may additionally lead to lowered social status, defined as placement on a 'ranking or hierarchy of perceived prestige' (Tajfel & Turner, 1979: 37). Subordinate groups often internalise their lower status and speak negatively of their own group, while displaying positive attitudes towards dominant outgroups (Biernat & Dovidio, 2003; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This attitude, although not considered atypical in low status groups, is viewed as paradoxical by rational standards, since these would dictate strategic employments to change that status, instead of resorting to 'consensual inferiority' (Tajfel & Turner, 1979: 37). This contributes to the understanding that restoration of positive views of one's group constitutes 'successful social identity management', whereas remaining in negative emotional states regarding one's group is indicative of 'unsuccessful identity management' (Martiny & Kessler, 2014: 748).

In the second category, Goffman's 'spoiled identity' (1963) should constitute forms of identity devaluation, such as *stigmatisation*, a more serious type of identity threat, potentially with more extensive social consequences for individuals and groups. In Goffman's sociology of stigma and deviance, stigma is defined as 'any physical or social attribute or sign' that functions in such a way as to 'devalue an actor's social identity', resulting to 'disqualifying it from full social acceptance' (Jary & Jary, 2000: 613). The term *stigma*, originating in the Greek word *στίγμα*, referred to 'bodily signs designed to expose something unusual and bad about the moral status of the signifier' (Goffman, 1963: 11), whereby these signs would be cut or burnt on the body of the 'blemished person', most often a slave, criminal, sinner or traitor. As such, the distinction of stigma comprises in it being a particular ascription placed upon social groups, functioning as an addition and deliberate 'branding' practice, in the sense of 'being the target of stigma' (Dovidio *et al.*, 2003: 2). As Goffman explains, stigma is not necessarily a material attribute as such, but instead a 'language of relationships' (1963: 13). As such, stigma is the 'scarlet letter' of social relations, expressed in both material and immaterial ways, ranging from textual representations to institutional practices (i.e. punishment of criminals or slave ownership). Goffman relates the theory of stigma to his sociology of deviance,

supporting that stigmatised identities define social notions of ‘normalcy’ and ‘deviance’, and as such, inclusion and acceptance or exclusion and rejection.

Identity overvaluation

In terms of the third type of destabilisation, *identity overvaluation*, similarly to identity devaluation, it draws mainly from SIT and is separated in a two-fold manner, namely identity *revaluation* and identity *overvaluation* proper, which are meant to connote different gradations of self-enhancement (Sedikides & Gregg, 2008). The first refers to SIT’s and Goffman’s assumptions that those whose identities are threatened by stereotypes and stigma, may attempt to manage them through a variety of strategies aiming to revalue the devalued identity. Researchers propose a variety of strategies. Some suggest (Huddy, 2001; Martiny & Kessler, 2014; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) the strategies of social creativity, social change or social mobility. The first refers to cases of poorly valued groups that create or construct an alternative identity, the second concerns competitive struggles with outgroups to alter the devalued group’s negative image and the final implies the rejection of one’s membership for the sake of moving to a more highly valued group (Martiny & Kessler, 2014). Alternatively, Sedikides and Gregg (2008) speak of another self-enhancing triad, which includes overemphasising one’s good points, overestimating one’s control over events and being unrealistically optimistic about one’s future. It is important to bear in mind that strategies can be rather expansive and varied (Martiny & Kessler, 2014), allowing for personal *agency*, but they will always be dependent on people’s subjective ‘belief systems about the nature and the *structure* of the relations between social groups in their society’ (Tajfel & Turner, 1979: 35). As exemplified by many (Bourdieu, 1977; Jessop, 2005), the resolution between agency and structure is strategy.

The same strategies can be used for identity overvaluation, although the tendency to overvalue one’s identity may betray more deep-seated attitudes towards one’s identity in relation to others, such as *narcissism*. Collective narcissism is defined as ‘an emotional investment in an unrealistic

belief about the in group's greatness' (de Zavala *et al.*, 2009: 1074). The lack of realism can lead to disappointment of 'great expectations'. Prior research, for instance, has revealed that the 'high expectations' of positive stereotypes often results in underperformance and frustration of these expectations (Cheryan & Bodenhausen, 2000: 399). Identity overvaluation is quite often intimately related to identity devaluation. For example, collective narcissism is understood as a kind of high, yet ambivalent, group esteem related to sensitivity to threats to the ingroup's image (Cichocka *et al.*, 2015; de Zavala *et al.*, 2009). As such, it implicitly derives from low collective self-esteem and besides the increased perception of threat and ingroup favouritism, it can be further manifested as unwillingness to forgive outgroups, intergroup aggression, social dominance orientation, right-wing authoritarianism, conspiracy theorising, blind patriotism, and mistrust (Cichocka *et al.*, 2015; de Zavala *et al.*, 2009). The exaggeration of this collective self-image, hence its *over*-valuation, concerns the revaluation being 'excessive and difficult to sustain' which can often result in insatiable quests for 'continual external validation' by others (de Zavala *et al.*, 2009: 1074).

In the study of national identities, the equivalent of identity revaluation as *self-protection* and overvaluation as *self-advancement* (Sedikides & Gregg, 2008) appears to correspond to the distinction between patriotic and nationalist identities, as made by many (Poole, 2007; Vincent 2002; Viroli, 1995), including George Orwell (1945), who argues that *patriotism* is defensive and seeks no power over other nations (group self-protection), while *nationalism* is offensive and power-oriented (group self-advancement). Similarly, the wider cultural construction of these terms tends to positively evaluate patriotism as a benevolent concern with the wellbeing of one's country and willingness to make sacrifices on its behalf, especially in times of crisis, and to negatively evaluate nationalism as a more bellicose, extreme, absolute and uncritical commitment to one's 'nation' as situated against other nations (Honderich 2005; McLean & McMillan 2009; Poole, 2007). This cultural tendency needs to be acknowledged because its ingrained value judgement unavoidably spills over to the theorisation of the two concepts (i.e. Primoratz, 2007). Although the distinction is

contested by some (i.e. Brubaker, 2004), for the purposes of this thesis, they will be accepted as varying degrees of extremity and intensity in national identity evaluations and revaluations.

Identity deficit

Finally, the fourth destabilisation type, *identity deficit* concerns the inability of the social entity to construct 'action-motivating meaning' (Habermas, 1973: 49). This type of crisis is also called 'motivation crisis' and is characterised by a lack of commitments, values and goals (Baumeister *et al.*, 1985; Habermas, 1973). This kind of destabilisation can lead to disorientation and inability of action due to the lack of consistent choices and decisions (Baumeister *et al.*, 1985). Identity deficit may result from an inadequately defined identity or patterns of protracted questioning of the identity and the continuous seeking for new sources of meaning and fulfilment (Baumeister *et al.*, 1985). In the case of national European identities, an inadequately defined European identity or its ongoing questioning may result in an identity deficit in this dimension. Identity deficit is distinct from an apathetic state of non-commitment, since it is characterised by a struggle for meaning (Baumeister *et al.*, 1985).

Just like multiple identity dimensions interact with each other on an ongoing and dynamic manner, the same should be expected from identity destabilisations themselves. As such, we should maintain that these types of identity destabilisations are not necessarily mutually exclusive and depending on the particular dynamics of a situation, they might coexist, thus potentially install or reinforce the potentiality of identity crisis. For example, as seen, an overvaluation destabilisation may succeed a destabilisation of identity devaluation (de Zavala *et al.*, 2009) or an identity conflict may be resolved by either devaluing or overvaluing one identity dimension over another (Hirsh & Kang, 2016). An identity deficit may come about as a result of an unresolved identity conflict, while the latter may provoke a diminished belief in the given group's capacity to resolve its conflicts. In a context of superordinate identities, like the European ones (Chryssochoou, 2000b), mutual identity

devaluations of multiple groups may lead to perceived intergroup conflicts, which may install a superordinate identity conflict (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). As a conclusion, the combinations and dynamics between these types can be as expansive and complex as identities themselves.

Summary and conclusion

This chapter has exposed the theoretical compass of this thesis. It departed from making the case for the concept of identity against its critics, arguing that although it may be a challenging and perplexing one, it remains a significant conception for social and political reality, as well as for our self-understanding and that of our shared communities. Rejecting the notion that the term ‘identity’ constitutes an unavoidably essentialist concept that assumes innate and fixed characteristics, this thesis followed Jenkins’s (2014: 14) assertion that ‘what matters is how we write and talk about [identity]’, rather than concluding with its erasure in the hopes of resolving its persistently inconclusive ontological debate (Alcoff, 2003; Wetherell, 2010). Instead, it is accepted that it is precisely this debate that enriches the field of identity research and its outcomes (Wetherell, 2010).

The chapter then proceeded to looking at national European identities and their origin in formal EU declarations, explaining their normative and desirable status. It was illustrated that national European identities are intertwined and shared, but at the same time separate and different for each country. In addition, the civic and cultural dimensions of European identities were exemplified and the connections between EU and European identities were pointed out. Subsequently, it was clarified that the field of European identities is separated in three main research streams, each of which contributes a unique understanding of different aspects of the social phenomenon in question. The field of European integration research exemplifies the elite and institutional version of European identities. Their normative theorising accounts for their ideational character and the empirical stream of research engages with the experiences of citizens. All three aspects were accepted as valuable and indispensable.

As a consequence, it was argued that an adequate approach to the study of national European identities would need to take into account all three levels of analysis. The theoretical model that appeared to be able to capitalise on all of these prior insights was found within a socio-psychological approach. More specifically, it was the integrated model of SIT and SRT that appeared capable of exploring the two fundamental features of identity, as both *a representation* and *a psychological experience*. Furthermore, SRT was additionally judged to be able to illuminate the elite-driven functions of phenomena like nation-building and European integration by focusing on culturally elite groups and their social influence. The main postulates of the two theories were described, as well as the points of merging between them.

However, as illuminating and insightful as this integrated model was supported to be, it was further argued that it could not provide a comprehensively developed and systematic analytical framework of identity destabilisations, potentially leading to crises of the identity. Moreover, it was diagnosed that such an all-embracing conceptual tool was missing from the existing literature or was developed in a fragmented manner. As such, the chapter proceeded to construct an elaborate typology of identity destabilisations that can address the multiple and complex dynamics of such crisis phenomena. The typology contained four types of destabilisations, namely, identity conflict, identity devaluation, identity overvaluation and identity deficit. This conceptual and analytical clarification is claimed to be the central theoretical contribution of this thesis. Having outlined the theoretical assumptions of the present study, the next chapter will sketch out its research design, rationale and fieldwork details.

Chapter 2

A Triangulated Single Case Study Research Design

Introduction: moving away from traditional approaches

Research design is defined as the sum of *strategies and tactics* that are selected by the researcher in the attempt to answer the research question (O’Leary, 2014; Robson, 2011). The function of the research design is to act as an operational work plan that will ensure that the evidence gathered allows us to answer the research question as unambiguously as possible (de Vaus, 2005; Kumar, 2014). In this respect, research design is about attention to detail and about convincing the sceptical reader that the conclusions of the research are valid and reliable (Gorard, 2013; Kumar, 2014; O’Leary, 2014). Simultaneously, research design is concerned with transforming research questions into feasible research projects and the choices made depend heavily on the nature of the research question (Gorard, 2013; Robson, 2011). Several authors compare research design to *architecture* saying that the researcher is similar to the architect who first needs to know what kind of building will be built before moving on to making the design and ordering the materials for its construction (de Vaus, 2005; Gorard, 2013; Robson, 2011). Research design is distinct from methodology, a point that is often misunderstood in the literature, since designing research is only partly about methods and mostly concerns the *rationale* behind them (de Vaus, 2005; Gorard, 2013; Kumar, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2010).

In terms of epistemological loyalties, social psychology has traditionally depended on experimental research designs and quantitative methods (Gough *et al.*, 2013; Hogg & Vaughan, 2014; Stainton Rogers, 2011). Social psychology, like many other social sciences, has been marked by the positivism versus post-positivism debate with positivist social psychology advocating the idea of *science* as the primary paradigm of social inquiry and ‘critical social psychology’ supporting alternative ways of

knowledge (Gough *et al.*, 2013; Stainton Rogers, 2011). In terms of our theoretical framework, SRT has been used in the past in combination with multiple designs and diverse methodologies and its spectrum appears to be pluralist enough. SIT's record, however, exemplifies a more particular focus on the 'minimal-group' technique, a controlled laboratory experimental method, originally developed by Tajfel himself, during which small groups are assigned specific identity categories and are asked to perform various tasks (Jenkins, 2014; McDermott, 2009).

However, there have been several criticisms against this methodology, such as the artificiality and social decontextualisation of experiments, as well as the suspicion that they actively produce the results they try to explore (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014; Jenkins, 2014; Smith *et al.*, 2015). For instance, experiments can cause less than spontaneous 'subject effects' in participant behaviour either by appearing to demand specific responses (demand characteristics) or by participants wishing to please the researcher (social desirability) (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014: 11). As an extension, the relevance of laboratory conditions to the 'less pure conditions that exist in the real world' has been doubted, as well as their validity and generalising ability (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014: 11; Jenkins, 2014; Smith *et al.*, 2015). Furthermore, experimental methods have been criticised more widely as unethical because of the manipulation and concealment of information they usually entail (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014; Smith *et al.*, 2015).

The calls of 'critical social psychology' for alternative ways of knowledge-making have demanded that SIT becomes pluralised too. For example, in a recent article Jackson and Sherriff (2013) argue that the dominance of positivist research methods in SIT limits the extent to which it enables an understanding of the complexities of identities and through the use of data derived by interviews they demonstrate the benefits that qualitative research can have for SIT and social psychology more widely. More precisely, the researchers highlight how qualitative data can add considerable richness to understandings of social relations and draw attention to inconsistencies and contradictions that

otherwise may go unnoticed. As Gough *et al.* (2013) explain, post-positivist critical social psychology remains still a minority.

The field of European identities and EU studies is also marked by distinctions between neo-positivist and critical/discursive traditions, as well as between quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Bourne, 2015; Exadaktylos & Radaelli, 2012; Manners *et al.*, 2015), as is the field of social psychology. Although Eurobarometer inspired research reigned for a long time, the methodological universe of European identities research was increasingly pluralised during the nineties with alternative research designs that were better equipped to illuminate aspects of identification that had been hidden till then.

Research on national European identities has largely been driven by the available data in the form of survey data produced by Eurobarometer (Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009; Cram, 2011). Although the Eurobarometers are a valuable longitudinal archive of public opinion in the EU, they have been accused of many shortcomings and inconsistencies (Pichler *et al.*, 2012). First, the wording of certain question items is problematic (Cram, 2011). For example, the question ‘how often do you think of yourself as a European, European and [nationality], nationality and [European]?’ fails to differentiate between EU and European identity (Cram, 2011). Another problem is the frequent change of wording in question-items, which can affect responses (Bruter, 2005). Most crucially, the majority of European identity research that uses Eurobarometer data actually uses the proxy of ‘support for EU membership’ because this is the question-item that has consistently been asked, while others question-items have been discontinued between years. This tendency overstates the relationship between support for European integration and identification as a European (Cram, 2011).

Moreover, Eurobarometer data and surveys in general cannot illuminate the meanings that people ascribe to different categories (Bruter, 2003; Cram, 2011; White, 2010). For example, it can be difficult to detect whether respondents refer to a civic dimension of identity or a cultural one (Bruter, 2005). In addition, surveys risk imposing questions on people that they do not question

themselves and provoking answers that have never occupied their minds before (Favell, 2005; Eder, 2009; Pilcher *et al.*, 2012). Similarly to experimental research, survey research may create the attitudes it reports, since people are willing to provide an answer to questions that are posed (Favell, 2005; Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009). Another similarity to experiments is that surveys lack the ability to substantially contextualise questions and answers in the broader social environment of diverse human subjects (Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009; Pilcher *et al.*, 2012). As such, polls may risk imposing a conceptual unity on extremely diverse political processes failing to capture their plurality of meanings (Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009).

The conclusions that we can draw from the above synopses of the methodological state of the art in our two fields is that singular methods of the past, like experiments and surveys, can only tell us this much about identity formation in Europe (Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009; Fuchs *et al.*, 2011). National European identities can only be understood by complex research designs with various analytical levels and various methodological approaches (Bourne, 2015; Fuchs *et al.*, 2011). Examples of multi-method projects are still limited (Bourne, 2015), but as Risse (2010: 34) reminds us, all methods are important because different methods focus on different aspects of the same phenomenon. For these reasons it was decided that *a single case study design*, sensitive to post-positivist sensibilities that addressed different levels of a single case with a triangulating multiplicity of qualitative methods would be the most suitable strategy for our research questions. The following section will elaborate on the design details of this study, including data collection, fieldwork management, research ethics and data analysis.

A triangulated single case study research design

Case studies are in-depth and detailed explorations of single cases (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The case in case study research is the *unit of analysis* about which we collect information and that which we try to understand (Baxter & Jack, 2008; de Vaus, 2005). A case can be anything: an event, a

process, an organisation, an individual person, a household, a family, a group, a community, a region, a nation (de Vaus, 2005; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Whatever the unit of analysis, case study research aims and offers the chance to examine the phenomenon in question within its context (Baxter & Jack, 2008; de Vaus, 2005). In this study, the unit of analysis is Greece and more precisely 'Greek European identity'. Since, as previously explained, national European identities come in 'national colours' and each country experiences them differently, it is argued here that a case study design can explore this specificity.

Researchers attribute various advantages to case study research, such as their ability to deliver fuller and more complicated accounts with detailed and rich descriptions, as well as their suitability to study complex phenomena and offer deeper understandings (Bennett & Elman, 2007; de Vaus, 2005; Mariotto *et al.*, 2012; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Moreover, case studying has been credited with having great heuristic value (Rossman & Rallis, 2003), extracting new ideas at close range, which can be used for conceptual innovation and development (Bennett & Elman, 2007) and being able to allow for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Finally, case studies are considered more sensitive to context, diversity of opinions, the complexities of social reality, and the passage of time (Rossman & Rallis, 2003) and overall, are evaluated as an 'excellent opportunity to gain tremendous insight into a case' (Baxter & Jack, 2008: 556).

Case study research does not aim to generalise to other cases and create universal laws in a positivist fashion, but rather it aims to understand in-depth specific cases (Mariotto *et al.*, 2012; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). In this sense, case study research is rather idiographic as opposed to nomothetic (Mariotto *et al.*, 2012). Some argue that case studies function on the basis of *reasoning analogy* which allows for lessons to be learnt by studying one case that can be applied as analogies for understanding other cases that exemplify similar dynamics (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). In case study research, generalisations occur to *theoretical propositions*, as opposed to populations, which is

called 'analytical generalisation' (Mariotto *et al.*, 2012; Silverman, 2013). As such, this thesis does not claim to be applicable to the totality of the Greek population, but rather it aims to explore the diversity and variability of expert and citizen opinions and identifications.

Case studies can be singular or multiple (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). In the latter type the researcher can conduct comparative cross-case analyses (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). In this study of identities during crises, it was decided to focus on a single national case, instead of comparing between two or more countries because it was felt that focusing on a single case would make better use of the strengths of this research design, such as depth, detail and rich descriptions. As such, it was preferred to study one case in a more elaborate manner, rather than studying more cases in shallower ways. Furthermore, since case studying can produce rich data, it was felt that multiple cases would be difficult to be reported adequately in the narrow space of a PhD thesis. Although comparative research has been very popular since the nineties, there is still room for national studies (Manners *et al.*, 2015), while it has been argued that we need both country-specific and comparative studies of European identities (Fuchs *et al.*, 2011).

In terms of the choice of Greece, selection of single cases is often justified on the basis of the case being either critical, instrumental, intrinsic, rare, unusual, odd, deviant, unique or extreme (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Mariotto *et al.*, 2012; Silverman, 2013; Yin, 2013). Although this is unavoidably a value judgement and such choices depend heavily on the researcher's preferences or capabilities, it was initially hypothesised that Greece appeared to be such a case within the representational context of the Euro crisis, due to the larger attention and blaming the country seemed to have attracted compared to other countries (Tzogopoulos, 2013). These impressions were confirmed by the ongoing literature review and recent studies that empirically found that media coverage of Greece has been more extreme, while Greece has been particularly 'othered' in public representations of the Euro crisis (see relevant chapter four). Based on these newly emergent research insights by other colleagues, it was decided that Greece could yield a single case study on

its own that would create the opportunity to better understand the Greek case within the crisis and within the EU. As explained (O'Leary, 2014: 197), cases that become 'politically hot' and the 'focus of media attention' can have intrinsic interest for research.

Finally, in order to exploit the full potential of case studies that unavoidably contain multiple elements, multiple methods need to be employed (de Vaus, 2005). As explained, case study research is complex and multi-layered and uses a variety of techniques (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Based on this, case study research needs to be paired with triangulated research designs. Since case study designs try to view social phenomena in a holistic way, the strategy of triangulation is suggested as an ideal companion (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Mariotto *et al.*, 2012). Recently, several authors have advocated the use of a 'triangular research designs' that combine multiple research methods and types of data in order to analyse the same problem (Ayoub *et al.*, 2014). It has been suggested that designs that employ more than one method or dataset for measuring concepts can result in greater confidence in research findings (Bryman, 2008).

Bryman (2008: 700) concisely defines triangulation as 'the use of more than one method or source of data in the study of a social phenomenon so that findings may be cross-checked'. The purpose and usefulness of triangulation is the enhancing effect it can have on the validity and reliability of the findings and the overcoming of method bias, since the use of multiple methods can remedy the biases and weaknesses found in any single method by capitalizing on each method's strengths (Ayoub *et al.*, 2014; Blaikie, 1991; Bryman, 2008; Jick, 1979). Furthermore, it is believed that triangulated research designs can add rigor, breadth complexity, richness and depth to any inquiry (Denzin, 2012), as well as offer a more holistic approach to the object of the study and a deeper understanding that can be more sensitive to context (Ayoub *et al.*, 2014; Jick, 1979).

Ultimately, triangular designs can allow for touching upon different dimensions of the same question, which can reduce the distance between method and ontology as they reflect the world in its complexity (Ayoub *et al.*, 2014). Since triangulation is believed to offer a more rounded and

trustworthy image of social reality (Bryman, 2008; Jick, 1979), the present study attempted to collect data from a variety of sources, such as historiographical data, media texts, emerging literature, expert interviews and interviews with Greek citizens. The next sections will provide details about the implementation of the design.

Addressing the research questions

As Breakwell (2004: 7) argues, the key to a good study is the systematic unpicking of each aspect of the research question. In the introduction, three research questions were outlined:

- What kind of knowledge is produced about the Greek debt/Euro crisis (representations) and how is collective identity related to that knowledge?
- How do Greek citizens respond (action) to the knowledge (representation) that is produced about the Greek debt/Euro crisis and the role of Greek European identity in it?
- Does the Greek debt/Euro crisis constitute an identity crisis of Greek European identity?

The three questions attempt to integrate Jaspal *et al.*'s (2014) three levels of analysis in face of crisis events, namely, representation, identity and action. The first question concerns the production of knowledge about the Greek/Euro crisis and the construction of Greek European identity within that knowledge. The second attempts to look at people's responses to these representations and the psychological experiences of identities. The third question seeks to understand whether the Greek debt/Euro crisis was represented and experienced as an identity crisis. On the basis of our postulate

of identity as *representation* and *experience* the following sections will show how these two dimensions are methodologically addressed.

Identity as representation

As argued in the theoretical chapter, identities and crises are intellectual and specialised concepts that are primarily analysed by members of the cultural, scientific and political elites (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014; Mackridge, 2010). Therefore, professionals such as academics, journalists and politicians are the specified ideational leaders of knowledge of these issues, which is transferred to the wider public through the media (Mylonas, 2012). The media is where the voices of various specialists and experts are heard (Kutter, 2014; Mylonas, 2012). Within the context of increasingly multifaceted and complexified professional careers, these roles are often merged and difficult to disentangle. For example, academic scholars who are considered experts in politics or economics write commentaries in newspapers explaining to the world the ‘Greek problem’ (Tzogopoulos, 2013: 68), while several financial experts are also financial journalists.

Simultaneously, many Greek academics have joined formal politics during the Euro crisis (i.e. Yanis Varoufakis, Eucleid Tsakalotos), while many Greek journalists are also politicians (i.e. Liana Kanelli, Terence Quick). More widely, scholars often use their intellectual influence to make political statements about various issues, as was the case with the ‘Save the Greeks from their Saviours’ initiative taken by a number of international scholars (Alvaro *et al.*, 2012). As such, there appears to exist a triangle of influence comprised by academic, journalistic and political output. The contributions of these professionals were considered in this exploration in the following ways:

Historical overview of Greek European identities: academic discourse as social representations

This thesis tries to comprehend how public knowledge about Greek European identities has been shaped during the economic crisis. In order to answer this question we first need points of reference

to past social representations of Greek European identities, so that comparisons can be made with current representations within the crisis context. In order to capture prior expert-born social representations, an extensive and systematic literature review was conducted on historical and social scientific accounts of Greek European identities. This historiographical detour further serves to historically contextualise the research topic (Walsh, 2012).

The peculiarity of this literature review, as compared to conventional literature reviews that summarise and critically analyse the field, is that it approaches the scientific literature as *a social representation in itself*. As such, academic accounts of Greek European identities of the past are understood through the theoretical prism of Moscovici's SRT. This approach has implications on how the literature is treated, in the sense that academic texts are treated as data in their own right. The results of this enquiry are presented in chapter three.

Emerging research as knowledge-builder and a political agent

An extensive and systematic literature review was conducted on social representations of the Euro crisis and Greece's role within it. During the past few years, a large number of academics have researched the social constructions of the Euro crisis (i.e. Joris *et al.*, 2014; Murray-Leach *et al.*, 2014; Wodak & Angouri, 2014; Vaara, 2014), as well as of the wider global financial crisis (i.e. Baker & Underhill, 2015; Breitstein & Dini, 2011; Robertson, 2014). Since 2010, an increasing number of both Greek and non-Greek academics took interest in the case of Greece, solely or as part of comparative projects, and have explored social constructions of Greece/Greeks and the crisis in various international (i.e. Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Kutter, 2014; Mylonas, 2012; Touri & Rogers, 2013) and Greek newspapers and social media (i.e. Exadaktylos & Capelos, 2015; Georgakopoulou, 2014; Kaitatzi-Whitlock, 2014; Kalantzis, 2015).

This stream of literature was first reviewed in terms of summarising emerging knowledge of Greek European identities as these were shaped within the crisis context and an elaborate coding system

was produced. As a second analytical layer, this newly emerging stream of research output was examined through Moscovici's SRT to unveil expert social representations on the topic of Greece and the crisis. How does the scientific community represent Greece and its crisis? What kind of positions and arguments are projected by researchers who work on Greece and the Euro crisis? These are some of the questions that were asked of the literature.

Eclectic selection of opinion pieces: explicit questions of identity

While conducting the above literature analysis a saturation point was reached in terms of arising themes, therefore it was evaluated that constructions of the Euro crisis and of Greece within it had been researched by multiple researchers quite extensively. Consequently, it was decided not to conduct yet another analysis of media texts and/or political speeches about Greece and the crisis that would not add anything new to the existing literature. Instead it was preferred to assemble and analyse an eclectic collection of opinion pieces written by various intellectual and political elites that explicitly talk about *identity issues as such* with regards to Greece and the crisis.

These were selected in both the English and the Greek language over a variety of online media sources, with particular criterion the overt reference to three main terms: Greece, crisis, and identity. It was decided to follow this strategy because as SRT postulates specialised terms generated and predominantly used by experts and elites are diffused in the wider society, therefore the particular interest of this study was on the ways that terms such as crisis, identity, identity crisis, national and European identity, are mobilised together in public discourse. Furthermore, this strategy was able to reveal new themes and to contribute new perspectives that had not been met in the extensive literature review, most notably on the European dimension of Greek identities.

It was decided to enrich the data collection of expert discourse with semi-structured interviews with Greek cultural, scientific and political elites. Special efforts were made to compile a diverse sample that could account for the pluralist character of social reality. As such, varied social scientists were interviewed including historians, sociologists, political scientists and economists. Political elites were selected across the wider spectrum of Greek political parties, including traditionally dominant parties, such as New Democracy and PASOK, newly emerging powers, such as SYRIZA and To Potami, and smaller parties, such as ANTARSYA, the Communist Party (KKE), the Democratic Left, the Ecologist Greens (Ecologoi Prasinoi) and EPAM.

A limitation of the sample compiled is the absence of political representatives of right and extreme right parties, such as ANEL and Golden Dawn. While the first was approached for data collection purposes, response was not prompt before the researcher needed to finalise fieldwork and return to her base. GD party members were not contacted for safety reasons, since by the time of fieldwork criminal dimensions of the party had already been made public. In retrospect, members of LAOS could have been contacted instead of ANEL, but the focus at the time was primarily on (Euro)-parliamentarian parties.

Most political elites interviewed were members of the Greek parliament or former members of the European parliament. Journalists and authors were also interviewed. Thirty three (33) interviews were completed. Eponymous consent forms were signed by the interviewees. Appendix 1 shows details of the participants, including name, professional identity and date of interview. The expert interviews were analysed following Moscovici's SRT in order to understand how expert discourse in Greece shapes the form of social representations about identities and crisis, but also Tajfel's theory of identity to uncover identity formations among elite groups. Ultimately, the aim was to compare and contrast elite/expert discourse to the discourse of ordinary citizens. The next section will illustrate how citizens' identifications and representations were explored.

Identity as experience

Prior empirical research on Greek European identities

Our second research question seeks to understand how Greek European identities are experienced during the Euro crisis by Greek citizens. As such, prior research on Greek identifications with Europe and the EU needed to be explored so there could be a point of reference for comparative purposes before and after the start of the economic crisis. Data for this endeavour were retrieved from Eurobarometer-based studies and other publications derived from projects that used different data sources and methods. Findings of previous research projects on Greek European identities were reviewed and summarised in order to construct an overall understanding about the evolution of identities in Greece over time. In addition, the large-scale aspect of research findings based on survey data offered an aggregate dimension in our pool of information.

Although at the beginning of the present research, a secondary analysis of Eurobarometer data from 1981, the year of Greece's accession to the EEC, to 2011, the year of available data at the time, was conducted, the results are not presented in this thesis, since new publications of the last few years have largely covered the same research results. As such, these results are only presented here bibliographically in chapter six.

Interviews: talking psychological experiences

Conversations between a researcher and a single participant can enhance the data collection process. In the literature, qualitative interviews have been understood as forms of dialogue that provide a warm and empathetic space for participants to talk (Kvale, 2008; Maso & Wester, 1996). In order to complement and enrich the data of this study and to understand how Greek citizens have experienced Greek European identities during the economic crisis, a series of qualitative interviews

were conducted with Greek citizens from various socio-economic categories. Efforts were made to incorporate in the sample citizens from diverse socio-economic groups, such as pensioners, students, unemployed, public servants, private sector employees and self-employed. While the first categories belong to the wider inactive force in the labour market, the last three belong to the active part of the labour force. The purpose of qualitative research is not to generalise to the whole population by using a representative sample, but to use a sample that holds a 'relativeness' that captures the characteristics of the wider population (O'Leary, 2014). The balancing strategy of socio-economic groups was evaluated as capable of grasping the main economic categories of the Greek population.

Thirty four (34) interviews were completed. Appendix 2 illustrates the demographic characteristics of all the citizen participants of this study. In both cases of expert and non-expert citizen interviews a minimum of thirty participants was judged to not be 'too small to support claims of having achieved either informational redundancy or theoretical saturation, or too large to permit the deep, case-oriented analysis that is the *raison-d'etre* of qualitative inquiry' (Sandelowski, 1995: 179).

As explained in the theoretical chapter, national and European identities are representations promoted by various elites and experts, which can imply 'an engineering view of politics' (Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009: 3) and can underplay the potential agency of the people. While social representations provide the backdrop against which people form their beliefs, the same people can function as co-constructors of social representations (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014). These interviews were used to understand more fully this process of co-construction of identities and crises by the people themselves.

Fieldwork: decisions and strategies

This section will provide explanations about how various issues and processes during fieldwork were addressed.

The interview guide

An interview guide was assembled based on the research questions. The same interview guide was used in both expert and non-expert participants. The interview guide was reflexively modified over time based on the new information that was coming out of the data collection. For example, a few new questions were added based on themes that were coming out of the data or were included to clarify answers more successfully. Altogether, however, these changes were minor and the guide remained similar to preserve consistency from interview to interview. The guide was organised in six parts, each characterised by a different theme. These thematic sections included the following:

1. Introductory questions about the economic crisis
2. The Greek national identity within the economic crisis
3. European integration and the European Union
4. The European Union as the Troika and the crisis management
5. The European identity
6. Closing questions

Appendix 3 provides detailed descriptions of the conversations that took place between researcher and participants, as well as what kind of questions were asked within each of the six thematic sections.

The pre-interview questionnaire

Before the interview, the participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire that consisted of three sections with questions on demographic, biographical and political characteristics. This questionnaire was used in order to have a profile of the participants and to enhance the analysis and the descriptive statistics of the sample. The questionnaire contained questions of previous transnational experiences such as living abroad or travelling abroad inside and outside Europe, as well as foreign languages skills and friendships with other nationals, because according to the literature such characteristics may enhance one's European or cosmopolitan identity (Kuhn, 2015). Other questions included issues of political participation activities, political ideology on the right to

left spectrum (with an extra choice to reject this particular spectrum as meaningless) and choice of vote in the Greek elections of 2012 and the Euroelections of 2014 with an open question for reasons for their choice. Finally, the demographic questions included age, gender, disability, educational level and field of knowledge. At the top of the questionnaire there was an 'office-use' field where the researcher assigned a code number for the participant so that the questionnaire sheet could remain anonymous. The results of these questionnaires can be seen in Appendix 2.

Sampling and recruitment strategies

The sampling strategy of this study can best be described as *purposive* (Silverman, 2013). Purposive sampling targets participants with specific characteristics (Silverman, 2013). Researchers suggest that a typology of participants or sample frame is established (O'Leary, 2014; Silverman, 2013). This strategy can help address the heterogeneity of large social groups, such as national ones, and can ensure that diversity is sufficient and balanced in the sample. As described above, participants for this study were chosen based on a typology of socio-economic distinctions. However, this does not answer the question of who the 'Greek people' of this study are. How was 'national identity' defined in this study, for the purposes of sampling research participants?

As already mentioned in the theoretical chapter, national identities are theorised in both ethno-cultural and civic/political terms. Consequently, national identity can be based on common language, religion, geography, history, descent, customs and citizenship (Mackridge, 2010). However, if the 'Greek people' of this study were defined by all of these criteria, many individuals would have been excluded because they were, for instance, atheist, lived abroad, had mixed historical experiences and cultural background, or lacked formal citizenship. As such, it was decided to settle for the minimum criterion of Greek language as a 'mother tongue'. In this sense, it was decided to treat 'speaking and writing Greek as an act of identity', not as a 'primordial constituent of

nationality’ but as a ‘chief medium through which speakers are acculturated into nationhood and one of their chief means by which they articulate their sense of it’ (Mackridge, 2010: 10-13).

The recruiting strategy of this study can better be described as a *snowballing* one, whereby once a suitable participant was identified and recruited, a sample was built by referrals to other potential participants (O’Leary, 2014). At the beginning, participants were recruited by capitalising on the researcher’s own social network of friends and extended family, since as advised, researchers should be strategic and make use of pre-existing relationships (O’Leary, 2014). The researcher also attempted to pursue recruitment in a proactive manner and some participants were directly approached by the researcher, as was the case with students on campuses.

Location: Athens

The location chosen for the fieldwork of this study was Athens, the capital of Greece. This location was selected for a variety of reasons. *First*, Athens is the political centre of Greece where major political decisions are made and it represents this centrality both inside and outside Greece. *Second*, most expert and political elites reside in Athens, a feature which facilitated recruitment. *Third*, Athens experiences political developments with more intensity compared to other cities or rural areas because protests and demonstrations occur more systematically in the capital. In this sense, Athenians may often carry an increased awareness of political events. *Fourth*, practical reasons dictated that a single location, instead of multiple locations, would simplify the data collection process by avoiding time spent travelling and associated costs (O’Leary, 2014). The limitations include the inability to explore differences between different regions and to extract the possibly diverse views from rural Greece, such as those of farmers. The location also influenced the choice of socio-economic groups, since the ones that were chosen were characteristic of urban contexts.

Timeframe: 2014

Fieldwork was initiated on March 1st, 2014 and completed on July, 24th, 2014 in Athens, Greece. This period of time was selected on the basis of practical considerations, such as time constraints and obligations to funders, rather than theoretical or epistemological grounds. Nevertheless, the data collection period coincided with the European Elections of May 2014, which was speculated to be an enhancing factor, since the EU was necessarily more salient in public debates and people may have had an increased awareness of European issues during that time.

Funding: UACES

When planning research, researchers need to estimate the availability of resources that will be necessary for the implementation of the research plan in order to safeguard the feasibility of the project (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The fieldwork of this research was supported by the UACES Scholarship 2014. The UACES Scholarship scheme offers 1,500 pounds to successful applicants for the purpose of doing fieldwork in another country between 1st February and 31st July for the running year. Fieldwork was completed within these time limits and UACES was presented with all the necessary documents and evidence, as requested, in autumn 2014. The scholarship greatly facilitated the fieldwork process by covering international and local travelling expenses.

Research ethics

Until recently there were few worries regarding the ethics of research with human participants (Taylor *et al.*, 2006). However, today research ethics has been elevated to an issue of primary importance and researchers need to be aware of, anticipate and address any ethical issues that may arise during their research (Buttolph Johnson *et al.*, 2008; Cresswell, 2013). This increased focus on research ethics is exemplified in the numerous publications of funding and regulatory bodies that

outline ethical principles and codes of professional conduct. Some examples in the context of the UK include the *British Sociological Association* (BSA), the *British Psychological Society* (BPS), the *Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and the Commonwealth* (ASA), the *Social Research Association* (SRA), and the *Economic and Social Research Council* (ESRC). For the purposes of this study, these official guidelines were consulted and followed to ensure the ethical and professional integrity of this research endeavour and the academic institutions that supported it. The following well-established ethical procedures were ensured.

Anonymity and confidentiality

While doing social research, researchers need to ensure the participants that their rights will be respected and protected (Cresswell, 2013). One of these fundamental rights is the right to anonymity and privacy (ASA, 1999; BSA, 2002). One of the ways anonymity can be safeguarded in qualitative research is by the use of pseudonyms (ASA, 1999; BSA, 2002; Cresswell, 2013), a tactic that is followed in this study in chapter six. Furthermore, appropriate measures should be taken to store research data in a secure way (BSA, 2002). Hard copies of questionnaires, forms or transcriptions were kept safely at the private residence of the researcher. The ideational leaders of this study were given the choice to participate eponymously or anonymously in the research and all chose to participate eponymously.

Informed consent

Today it is standard practice to obtain informed consent in writing by the research participants prior to their engagement in the study (Crisp & Turner, 2007). This ethical procedure involves the full identification of the researcher, including the institution, the explanation of the study's purposes, the specification of sponsorship, and future use of the study's findings (ASA, 1999; BSA, 2002; Cresswell, 2013). Additionally, participants need to be informed about the expected degree and type

of their participation, as well as the rationale for their selection (Cresswell, 2013). In this respect, full explanations were provided when participants asked questions about the study. A *Participant's Information Pack* was put together in the Greek language that included the information sheet, the consent form, the questionnaire, and the discussion agenda (see Appendix 4). Signed consent forms were retrieved from all the participants of this study.

Right to withdraw

People approached for the purposes of social research have the right to refuse to participate (BSA, 2002; Taylor *et al.*, 2006). Following from this, participants who have given their consent maintain their right to depart from the research project (Buttolph-Johnson & Reynolds, 2008). The right to withdraw from the study at any point in time is considered to be an important feature of the ethical conduct of social research (Cresswell, 2013; Taylor *et al.*, 2006). Participants were reassured that no harm or nuisance would come to them upon their voluntary and free departure. None of the participants withdrew their participation. No person was pressed to participate in this research.

Data management and analysis

Approach to qualitative data analysis: a thematic analysis

There are many approaches to qualitative analysis, such as critical discourse analysis (CDA), interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), conversation analysis, grounded theory, narrative analysis, and many more (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016). In the context of a qualitative research project, researchers need to make explicit the ways they have approached the analysis of their qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016). The approach taken in the present project can best be described as a thematic analysis approach. In terms of defining its meaning, as argued (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 77), thematic analysis is 'a poorly demarcated, rarely-acknowledged, yet widely-used qualitative analytic method'. There appears to be a debate in the

literature whether thematic analysis is a separate and distinct approach *as such* or rather a methodological tool for analysis across different approaches (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Ryan & Bernard, 2000).

Thematic analysis may appear as a methodological tool, rather than an approach, because it does not adhere to strong philosophical underpinnings compared to other approaches that do so, such as CDA or IPA, respectively guided by the ontological premises of 'power' or 'experience' (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Given that in this project there was considerable theoretical input prior to the analysis of the data, namely the integrated model of SIT and SRT, as well as the typology of identity destabilisations, it was evaluated that the thin philosophical foundation of thematic analysis could assist in avoiding the pitfall of overcrowding the analysis with too many *a priori* theoretical categories. Notwithstanding the terminological debate, thematic analysis is accepted here as a distinct qualitative analytical approach in its own right, whose purpose is to 'search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon' (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006: 82). In this context, a 'theme is used as attribute, descriptor, element, and concept... an implicit topic that organises a group of repeating ideas... has a high degree of generality that unifies ideas regarding the subject of inquiry' (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016: 101). The theme represents a level of pattern within the data that captures something important in relation to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Researchers writing on epistemological and methodological issues have provided detailed and clear instructions on how to conduct thematic analysis (i.e. Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016). Although the analytical process is often presented in a linear 'step-by-step' fashion, researchers do emphasise that the actual implementation has a more cyclical character and involves frequent revisions and reflective turns from later stages to earlier ones (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016). This is largely due to the fact that qualitative analysis entails constant reading and rereading of data, so that researchers can substantially familiarise

themselves with the data and achieve what is called 'immersion' (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016). Nevertheless, the analytic process includes recognisable stages that widely comprise of preparing the data for analysis, initial analysis and coding, revision and refinement, construction of storyline and writing-up.

The first stage includes the preparation of the raw data for the analysis. For example, the interview recordings need to be transformed into transcripts. All the interviews of the present project were transcribed verbatim. Given that qualitative research produces large and rich data, some interviews may also need to be transformed into interview summaries for the purposes of better managing the volume of data (Feredey & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). This tactic was used in this research by turning expert interviews into summaries since these interviews were larger and richer in content compared to the non-expert citizens' interviews. In order to avoid drifting away from the original meaning of the participants, the original wording was maintained as much as possible during the summarising of their accounts.

If the research design includes a large deductive component, as was the case with the present project that was making use of pre-existing theories and analytical frameworks, it is advised that the researcher develops a 'code manual' before initiating the analysis (Feredey & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). This tactic 'serves as a data management tool' (Feredey & Muir-Cochrane, 2006: 84) that can assist in 'threading together' the theoretical framework to the product of the analysis (Grant & Osanloo, 2010: 12). This tactic was followed by listing theoretical categories on a piece of paper and later inserting them in the N-Vivo software as nodes. Subsequently, passages of the transcriptions were coded underneath the prescribed categories accordingly. Analysis of interview transcripts were guided, but not confined, by a priori categories, since as advised by researchers (Feredey & Muir-Cochrane, 2006), a hybrid approach between deductive and inductive analyses can allow researchers to see emerging themes, not prescribed in the theoretical pretext of the research.

During the analysis of empirical data it is important that researchers keep an eye out for moments of resonance between the pre-existing theory and the newly produced data, but also for possible new analytic categories coming out of the data (Bendassoli, 2013). The two techniques complement each other. Ultimately, what matters is that there are multiple reflective and engaged returns from deduction to induction, and back again, to allow for deeper analytical rigour and insight. As such, attempts were made to conduct the coding of the present databases by using both inductive and deductive categories, as advised by prior literature (see, for example, Glaser's distinction between 'substantive/observational' codes and 'theoretical' ones, 1978; or Fereday & Muir-Cochrane's 'hybrid approach' of 'data-driven codes' and 'theory-driven' ones, 2006).

For example, this inductive approach was needed in this project because the analytic categories of each identity destabilisation were defined with a relatively high level of abstraction regarding various types of social identities, while the case study of the research focused on the specificities of national and European identities. Consequently, inductive reasoning was followed when interpreting what an identity conflict, devaluation, overvaluation or deficit could mean in the context of these two interconnected social identities. Although these codes were processed through N-Vivo, at many occasions pen and paper was used to create maps, lists and tables because these felt helpful for clarifying the researcher's thinking and understanding. All codes, whether deductively or inductively generated, were recorded in the N-Vivo, making up the totality of nodes, which comprises the analytical *codebook*.

Experienced researchers suggest that after reading and coding the totality of the datasets that are meant to be analysed, there should be a process of rereading and double-checking the developed analytical codes. This process is called 'verification' or 'rectification' (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016: 106) and involves 'testing the reliability of the codes and themes' (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006: 85) and achieving the 'refinement of the analysis' (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 82). During this stage, codes are reassessed, similar and related codes are grouped under clusters, and relations are identified

between themes and the research questions (Feredey & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016). In other words, the resulting themes are managed and organised in such a way as to provide a meaningful, coherent and logical answer to the original research questions (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016). These tactics were followed to the best of the present researcher's ability.

At the final analytical stage of analysis, the researcher needs to put together a 'storyline' that shall give a holistic view of the study phenomenon (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016: 107). This stage necessarily entails decisions regarding the presentation of results. For this project, it was chosen to present the results in accordance with the analytical framework of identity destabilisations in order to provide a sense of structure and facilitation of the organisation of the material. Correspondingly, each chapter contains four sections, each elaborating on one type of identity destabilisation as prescribed by the analytical framework.

Researchers suggest that in order to increase the construct validity and establish a clear chain of evidence regarding how conclusions were drawn, the strategy of 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973; Mariotto *et al.*, 2012) should be followed. In this thesis, examples of 'raw data' are used extensively in order to achieve thicker descriptions and to punctuate the arguments and conclusions that are drawn.

The challenge of crafting the storyline of the research project lies in the 'researchers' creativity to depict themes through the presentation of a story that is psychologically, culturally, and socially innovative' (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016: 107). Efforts were made to meet these challenges. Retrospectively, more time, effort and reassessment should had been devoted to the analytical stage and integration of theory and results, but as explained in the literature, novice researchers can be constrained by many different factors, such as timeframes, resources, capabilities, level of experience, or simply working as a single researcher (Feredey & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Grant & Osanloo, 2010; Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016).

Finally, there are two more issues that would warrant further clarifications, such as the question of the quantification of data and that of interpretation. The first relates to the judgement of how many participants would have to refer to a particular theme in order to distinguish it as a noteworthy one. While N-Vivo can support recording of numbers, it was decided that the number of participants would not be an important factor in the presentation of results and both prevalent and less prevalent themes would be reported. Since thematic analysis is different to content analysis, researchers advise that themes are reported regardless of their quantifiable prevalence in the datasets (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Instead, what's important is whether a theme captures something significant with regards to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Moreover, it was evident that some themes were prevalent in one dataset but not another, therefore both needed to be mentioned. Nevertheless, in the empirical chapters of this thesis, if a theme is shared by many participants, this is noted so that readers can have a fuller picture of the research findings.

In terms of the question of interpretation, besides the issue of reflexivity in social research (May & Perry, 2010), this also links to the distinction between semantic and latent themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006) or otherwise put, 'latent and manifest content' (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016: 101). While the semantic/manifest content concerns what the participants are literally and expressively are saying, the latent content corresponds to what may be implying or paraphrased. The researcher's subjective understanding was employed in allocating codes, selecting themes or clustering them. Explaining in detail one's interpretative reasoning can be challenging, since the way to establishing themes and storylines based on emerging data patterns entail elements of 'intuition' and 'creativity' which are 'difficult to describe' (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016: 102, 105). Nevertheless, a researcher's subjective perception unavoidably influences the analysis, since as explained, themes 'reside in our heads', within 'our thinking about our data' and the 'creation of links' between them as we attempt 'to understand them' (Ely *et al.* in Braun & Clarke, 2006: 80).

Summary and conclusion

This chapter begun by outlining the traditional research designs in social psychology and in national European identity research. It was argued that previous approaches were overtly positivist and dominated by particular methodologies, such as surveys and experiments. As such, it was argued that their methodological horizon needed to be pluralised with the additions of more qualitative and participatory methods. The research design of this research was described and it was demonstrated that a single case study triangulated approach was best suited to meet the needs of this study's research questions. The research questions themselves were broken down to their individual parts in order to demonstrate how each aspect of the identity phenomenon would be addressed in terms of data sources and methods.

It was explained that historiographical accounts of Greek European identity would provide not only historical contextualisation to the research topic, but also a point of reference for comparisons before and after the start of the economic crisis. Emerging expert knowledge on Greek identity and the crisis, as well as selected opinion pieces were added to the datasets in order to further inform the answering of questions on Greece's identity representations during the economic crisis. Expert and non-expert interviews were chosen as the most adequate methods to explore the theoretical assumptions made by SRT, as well as the psychological experiences of research participants. Subsequently, detailed accounts of fieldwork proceedings and strategies were offered, from the choice of location to sampling strategies. A section on research ethics was also included, as well as an indication of the approach and techniques followed to analyse the empirical data.

Chapter 3

Greek European Identity: A Historiography of Identity Crises

'The identity crisis is the central problem of the neo-Hellenic society, the constituent element of the contemporary Hellenism, and the axis around which our modern society revolves'

(Tsaousis, 1998: 17)

Introduction

As postulated in chapter one, shared social reality depends on the indirect re-enactment of that which is directly inaccessible and mystifying, its *re-presentation* (Pitkin, 1967). It follows from this, that both identity and crisis are themselves representations that intimately relate to people's social and psychological experiences of identity, while the 'symptom' of a collective identity crisis is subject to the interpretations humans give to their collective experience (Chrysoschoou, 2000b; Waxman, 2006). As argued, the experience of identity is founded on two premises: self-awareness and temporality (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014; Leccardi, 2005). This temporality encourages a linear, yet not necessarily evolutionary, perception of identity formation, articulated in past, present and future (Knight & Stewart, 2016). The narration and interpretation of the collective, historical past has been widely established as an instrumental resource upon which national identities are built (Beaton & Ricks, 2009). The past temporality of national identities is articulated within historiography, the 'writing of history' (Cheng, 2012: 1), whereby the 'historical event though unseen, is imaginable' (Walsh, 2012: 22). Historiography is inspired by events and facts, but is not entirely dependent on them since history-narrating is in itself a representation of this unseen and unlived distant past. As put, 'history is not constructed of facts; it is constructed in the way we anticipate, perceive, interpret and narrate those facts in relation to our past and our future' (Liakos & Kouki, 2015: 49).

This chapter aims to provide an overview of the historiography of Greek European identity as this has been represented in expert scholarly discourse, written by Greeks and non-Greeks alike. In this way the perspective of both ingroup and outgroup is included to address the internal and external, chosen and ascribed, construction of national identities (Phillips, 2007). Applying the typology of identity destabilisations that was presented in chapter one, academic discourse on Greek European identity is interrogated for destabilising 'signs of crisis'. The elucidation of past representations of 'identity crises' in 'history-telling' about Greece will assist in answering our research questions in a twofold manner. *First*, it will historically contextualise the formation of Greek European identity representations, a process utterly necessary for a deeper understanding and acquisition of a 'fuller picture'. As Walsh (2012: 22) explains, 'historical contextualisation' is similar to the technique of painting restoration, named *rigatino*, of filling in the gaps of the historical canvas with 'small flecks of paint'. Such a 'rigatino approach' is used here to provide small historical flecks. *Second*, this historiographical detour will facilitate addressing the research questions by offering a point of reference for the 'temporal comparison of identities' (Redersdorff & Guimond, 2006: 76) before and after the economic crisis.

As it becomes apparent in this chapter, the historiography of Greece is a continuous representation of multiple identity 'crises'. In other words, the very historical understanding of Greece has been anchored around the idea of crisis itself (i.e. Tsoulos, 1998). Various political and social tensions are presented as triggers of crisis. Since the very inception of the Modern Greek nation-state, Greek identity appears to be 'in crisis'. Mackridge (2010), for example, refers to an 'identity crisis' provoked by the dispute over the civic rights of *heterochthons* (Greeks from outside the state borders) during the early years of state-building. In more recent years, Verney and Michalaki (2014: 145) mention that Greece during the post-Cold war era was 'rapidly developing a new kind of identity crisis' due to the effects of globalisation and mass immigration, while Molokotos-Liederman (2003) and Makrides (2005) use the term to refer to the debate regarding the erasure of religious affiliation from identity cards in the early two-thousands. Kalaitzidis (2010: 98) speaks of a 'mini-identity crisis' fuelled by the

changing geopolitical conditions in the Balkans, situated within the wider opposition between the 'western Europeanising elements of Greek society' and its 'Eastern more introspective elements', while Stauning-Willert (2014: 91) argues that Greece's 'historical and traumatic relationship' with Europe and the West is marked by a 'chronic identity crisis'. Chronic crisis it must be, since it appears to exist since antiquity. Elsner (2004: 274), examining Pausanias's pilgrimage in the Roman Empire, observes 'an identity crisis of second-century Greece' and Tinsley (2006: 132) calls the Persian Wars 'Classical Greece's identity crisis'.

However, although 'identity crises' are frequent constructs in Greek studies, little thought has been dedicated to the varied character of these 'crises'. Calotychos (2013: 10), rightly recognises the 'multidimensionality of crises' by stating that Greece's 'identity crisis' in relation to the Balkans and Europe contains 'linguistic, symbolic, metaphorical, narrativistic, rhetorical and tropological dimensions', just like the Eurozone crisis can be understood not only as an economic crisis, but also a political, social and cultural one (Ntampoudi, 2015). However, although this recognition of multiple dimensions recognises the numerous domains within which identities and possible crises may occur, it still does not account for the varied and distinct socio-psychological *functions* of what is termed 'identity crisis'. Although different terms are used loosely to refer to the meaning of crisis, such as 'dispute', 'controversy', 'battle', 'exclusion', 'conflict', 'debate', 'dilemma', 'isolation', 'trauma', 'obscurity', 'ambiguity', 'marginality', 'threat', 'survival' and 'challenge' (Calotychos, 2013: 10; Lalioti, 2009: 73; Mackridge, 2010: 175-176; Stauning-Willert, 2014: 91; Verney & Michalaki, 2014: 145), these notions are not systematically conceptualised, theorised and operationalised.

The present chapter endeavours to make an initial step towards remedying this shortcoming. Its sections follow the typology of identity destabilisations developed, hence the first section addresses identity conflicts, the second concerns identity overvaluations, the third deals with identity devaluations, and the last discusses identity deficits. Each section is divided in subthemes, therefore the *first* section analyses variations of conflictual representations, or as Moscovici puts it, 'polemic

representations', such as the one between East and West and cultural dualism (Diamandouros, 1994), diagnosing that these constitute 'binary oppositions' that eventually amount to the wider representation of 'hybridity as a problem'. The *second* section analyses Hellenism and Philhellenism as identity overvaluations from within and from without Greek society, resulting in the creation of 'great expectations'. The *third* section transitions towards the discussion of their frustration, outlining forms of identity devaluation as these were framed with reference to the 19th century Philhellenic decline in Europe or Greece's trajectory within the EU. Finally, the *fourth* section on identity deficits focuses on Greece's Western belonging as an identity loss, narratives of expulsion and exclusion from the EU, and the idea of 'national exceptionalism' as belonging nowhere.

Identity conflict: binary oppositions and the 'problem' of hybridity

As already explained, identity conflict constitutes a type of identity destabilisation in the sense that a social entity is torn between two or more forces which can lead to conflictual dynamics within the entity (Baumeister *et al.*, 1985). In a national society, this conflict and its potential violence can be direct, structural/systemic, or cultural/symbolic (Galtung, 1969, 1990; Žižek, 2009). Reviewing Greek historiography, it becomes apparent that representations of modern Greece are marked by various conflicts between different ideologies and social groups. Examples include the historical oppositions between the Royalists and the Venizelists, which constituted the *National Schism* (Εθνικός Διχασμός), or between the communists and the anti-communists, most notably exemplified in the *Civil War* that followed WWII (1945-1949) (Clogg, 2002; Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013). These divisions are portrayed as long-term, recurring and profound cleavages within Greek society and as closely associated with the international developments of their time, i.e. the National Schism within the wider European alliances of the WWI and the Civil War within the wider Cold War context (Clogg, 2002; Gerolymatos, 2004). Consequently, foreign relations are constructed as central to the domestic conflicts over the desired 'friends of the nation'.

The peculiarity of these representations is that they are not anchored around multiple social forces, but instead exemplify a continuity of *dualities*, that is, battles between *two* forces. Pappas (2014: 53), for example, calls this ‘bipolar hegemony’, strategically infused by political actors who use polarisation to divide society along single cleavages. Lipowatz (1994) coins the term ‘split Greek identity’, while Frary (2014: 123) refers to the ‘dialectical split of Greek society’ (see also Herzfeld’s *disemia*, 1989). As a result, *binary oppositions* become the predominant and repetitive anchoring of Greek identity, while the *hybridity* that is understood as the product of these dualist conflicts is projected as one of the main ‘problems’ of modern Greek identity. Although the representation of ‘hybridity as a problem’ to be solved or eradicated is not the only representation of modern Greece and alternative readings are voiced in the historical and social scientific literature, it still remains the dominant one, creating the image of a national European identity always in conflict within itself, thus always in peril of ‘crisis’. The remaining section will elaborate on these points by looking at the divide between East and West, cultural dualism, binaries and hybridity.

Eternally between East and West

Beginning with dualist representations, perhaps the most dominant schema of Greek identity is the divide between East and West (Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013; Tsoukalas, 1999). It is almost customary that every historical account of Greece begins by narrating the story of the small nation that resides at the edges of both Europe and Asia, and as such, the crossroads between East and West (i.e. Kolocotroni & Mitsi, 2008; Smith, 1986). In this storyline, Europe and Asia are represented as prototypes of the wider constructions of the West/Occident and the East/Orient, respectively (Lewis & Wigen, 1997). The main registers upon which these dichotomies are made are geographical and historical, but above all, cultural and civilisational (Katzenstein & Checkel 2009; Kokosalakis & Psimmenos, 2002; Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013). For example, Greece is frequently represented in scholarly discourse as both Western and Eastern by simultaneously being the origin of Western

civilisation and foundation of the EU's political canon, and an integral historical part of the Eastern Roman Empire after the divide of 364 BC, the Byzantine Empire after the fall of Rome in the 5th century, and the Ottoman Empire between the 15th and 19th centuries (Barker, 2008; Katzenstein & Checkel, 2009; Tsoukalas, 1999).

To be sure, the split identity framework is not unique to Greece. For example, Frary (2014: 123) compares it to the Russian debate between Slavophiles and Westernizers in 1830-1840s, while AbdelRehim (2013) describes Egyptian identity as 'split' between religious Islam and Western secularism. Matsusima (2008) discusses the 'split of Japanese identity in outward and inward identities' after the impact of WWII defeat and Western occupation, while Staab (1998) talks about the resulting 'split national identity' of Eastern and Western Germany. In many respects, split identities indicate the impact of globalisation and modernisation, as well as the problems of conflictual international relations or interventionist global politics.

Cultural dualism: the Diamandouros thesis

It can reasonably be argued that in Greek studies the text that epitomises this pattern of dualist expert representations is the one by Nikiforos Diamandouros on *cultural dualism* (1994), which has been widely influential among scholars who study Greece. As explained (Triantafyllidou *et al.*, 2013: 3), the Diamandouros thesis has been 'a reference point for understanding Modern Greece'. In SRT's words, it has acted as a 'hegemonic representation'. The cultural dualism schema has served as an explanatory background in various studies on diverse topics, ranging from the relationship between religion and politics (Anastassiadis, 2004; Chrysoloras, 2004; Stavrakakis, 2002b) to the politics of reproduction (Halkias, 2004; Paxson, 2004). However, most studies referring to cultural dualism have focused on Greece's Europeanisation and reform policy (Featherstone *et al.*, 2001; Featherstone, 2005; Kazakos, 2004; Matsaganis, 2007; Monastiriotis & Antoniadis, 2009; Spanou, 2008), most

notably foreign policy change (Kalpadakis & Sotiropoulos, 2007; Mavrogenis & Kelman, 2013; Stavridis, 2003; Stefanidis, 2001; Stephanidēs, 2007).

According to Diamandouros (1994)⁷, the history of modern Greece can be understood as an antagonistic battle between two political cultures, namely the ‘underdogs’ and the ‘modernizers’. Within this dualist representation, the underdog culture is presented as the older of the two, rooted in the Byzantine, Balkan and Ottoman heritages of Greece, while the modernizing culture is the younger one, inspired by the ideas of the Enlightenment and liberalism (ibid: 12, 22). In terms of political and economic attitudes, the underdog culture features as closer to what Weber calls a ‘sultanistic regime’, having a strong statist orientation, favouring paternalism and protectionism, and being prone to familism, populism and clientelism (ibid: 12-20). In contrast, the modernizing culture is presented as encompassing none of the above, favouring reform and rationalisation along liberal and capitalist routes, the market mechanism and competitive international economy (ibid: 22-23). The underdog is said to express ambivalence towards capitalism, the market, the liberal Western socio-economic model and modernisation, to fear rationalisation and structural reforms, and to demand redistributive policies (ibid: 12-44). As such, the underdog is believed to be fond of pre-capitalist practices and eager to experiment with alternative routes to modernity (ibid: 12-13, 21-22).

In terms of foreign relations, the modernizing culture is presented as extrovert and looking at the industrially advanced nations of the West for inspiration and support in an ‘imitative and eclectic’ way, while the underdog culture appears introvert and maintains militant anti-Western and anti-American (sic)⁸ stances, has a defensive view of international affairs and tends to identify closely with collectivities ‘perceived to have suffered from western inequity’ (ibid: 19-26). Regarding the EU, the underdog culture is said to express intense affect regarding admission to the EEC, punctuated by

⁷ Diamandouros’s theory is presented here by following a precise reproduction of the original words and expressions to convey it as authentically as possible.

⁸ ‘Anti-Americanism’ is used here by Diamandouros to connote opposition towards the United States’ foreign policy, but it should be argued that it is an inaccurate term that obliterates the existence of multiple Americas, i.e. Central America and Latin America, a common mistake in wider literature.

demonological beliefs about the project of European integration, while the modernizing culture embraces the process of European integration (ibid: 44). As far as national identity is concerned, while the underdog is presented as xenophobic and intolerant, dividing the world into 'philhellenes' and 'mishellenes' ('friends' and 'enemies' of the Greeks), suffering from primordial attachments and siege mentality regarding the 'contraction of Hellenism' (ibid: 13-38), the modernizing culture appears to have a cultural cosmopolitanism, a 'milder and more sophisticated' xenophobia, and a 'dynamic and more realistic' nationalism grounded in the will for survival (ibid: 25-27). In terms of wider political values, the underdog seems to be characterised by a levelling egalitarianism and makes demands for compensatory justice, while the modernizers appear to support liberalism and democracy (ibid: 24). Finally, while the underdog is highly religious, the modernizing culture is secular (ibid: 12, 23).

Although Diamandouros, contrary to what many of his critics argue (Demertzis, 1997; Stavrakakis, 2002b; Xenakis, 2013) does make efforts to note the ideo-typical nature of these two cultural constructs (Weber, 1922) and emphasise their cross-sectional overlapping (Diamandouros, 1994: 12-13), the dualistic structure of his thesis cannot avoid but reproducing additional dualisms, other than the original between 'underdog' and 'moderniser'. Such is the danger of dualisms: once two poles are identified, one can always find a point on which new elements differ and situate them in ever more dualisms, permitting the classification of everything (Culler, 2002). Using SRT, we can detect at least four ways of objectifications through which these dualisms are formed. The *first* objectification joins together seemingly oppositional representations, the *second* functions by pairing a representational object with the lack of it, the *third* one by coupling it with its antithesis, and the *fourth* by contrasting different versions of the same object.

Concerning the first objectification, representations of dichotomies can be identified between the past and the future, tradition and modernity, backwardness and progress, emotion and rationalism, redistribution and competition, Euroscepticism and Europeanism, nationalism and cosmopolitanism,

religiosity and secularism, and as expected, the East and the West. In terms of the second objectification, we can identify the various representations within the one culture and the lack of these in the other, such as protectionism, familism, populism and clientelism within the underdog but not within the modernizing culture, or will for reform and change, sophistication, and eclecticism within the modernizing culture but not within the underdog one. Regarding the third dualist objectification, antitheses can be recognised in the allusions to the representations of capitalism and anti-capitalism, liberalism and anti-liberalism, market and anti-market, globalisation and anti-globalisation, modernisation and anti-modernisation. Finally, with reference to the fourth objectification, both cultures are represented as nationalist and cosmopolitan, but the character of their respective nationalisms and cosmopolitanisms differs. While the modernizer's nationalism is more 'sophisticated and milder', pragmatic and able to exploit the opportunities in the international field, the underdog's nationalism is a defensive and victimised one and as such, less flexible and more absolute. Furthermore, while the underdog's cosmopolitanism is associated around the 'less privileged' of the earth and what is presented as 'Third World solidarity', the modernising cosmopolitanism is presented as more Eurocentric and West-centric.

Binary oppositions and hybridity

All of the above can be understood as *binary oppositions*. The notion of binary oppositions is argued to be an age-old one in human story-making and many theoretical traditions have engaged with it, from Hegelian dialectics and Nietzsche's aphorisms to the structuralist theory of Saussure and Levi-Strauss and their post-structuralist/deconstructivist critics, such as Derrida (Chueh, 2004; Egan, 2007; Fourie, 2007). Summarising the debate of binary oppositions, while some argue that they are an integral and even useful part of human cognition and a structural feature of language, others argue that binary oppositions are not natural or beneficial, but rather dangerous constructions that collapse meaning into dualities that foster discrimination since the binary relationship tends to be

unequal⁹ (Cheek, 1999). Both camps can be criticised for assuming an essential relationship exists between two entities (Chueh, 2004).

The dualistic understanding of Greek identity appears intimately related to the question of *hybridity*, defined as 'a mixture of cultures' (Baumgartner & Zinggeler, 2010: 3). Demertzis (1997: 118), for example, argues that Greece exemplifies a 'merging of modernisation processes and components' and stands 'in between' the road to European modernity, while Herzfeld (1989: 20) notes that the Greeks are 'neither dramatically exotic, nor yet unambiguously European' (see also 'inventive syncretism, Lianeri, 2014). Whether Greece's hybridity is conceptualised as a cultural and civilisational hybridity or a political and normative one (Xenakis, 2013), the important question is the standpoint that is taken towards this hybridity, which is the point where Moscovici's 'battle of ideas' seems to take place. In this respect, while some conceptualise this hybridity of identity as a problem to be overcome or eliminated, others do not share this view. Diamandouros (1994, 2013), for example, through a cultural conflict viewpoint and taking a clear stance in favour of modernisation, views the underdog culture as a social element that constitutes an obstacle to the progress and development of the country, and implies that the modernizing culture should dominate, which in effect would reduce the hybridity of Greek identity. As such, the main understanding of this hybridity is as a hindrance, rather than as a source of enrichment and diversity.

Other authors offer alternative views. For example, Kokosalakis and Psimmenos (2002) argue that Greek identity flourishes with both tradition and modernity and the constituent parts of Greek culture are not incompatible with themselves, with Europe or with the outside world in general, but rather they can be understood as being 'at home' with post-modernity and globalisation. For the authors, this synthesis between tradition and modernity does not reject the values of either, while it is also sensitive to 'the moral and cultural decay' that exists in both of them (Kokosalakis & Psimmenos, 2002). Tsoukalas (1999: 13) voices the view that the hybridity may be 'an unforeseen

⁹ See feminist theory, for example, where the male/female dichotomy serves to disadvantage the female counterpart (Egan, 2007).

blessing' and that there is 'pleasure in preserving [these] ambiguous identity links with both East and West', albeit despite their 'obvious social and political shortcomings'. Most remarkably, these authors refer to the works of poets and literary figures to support their claims, perhaps implicitly suggesting that such arguments can only be voiced within 'forms of knowledge', like the arts and the humanities, traditionally understood as 'softer' compared to the 'harder' fields of applied social sciences (Craig, 2012). A 'poetic license'¹⁰, sort of speak, that is expressed outside the hegemonic representation of 'hybridity as a problem'. These discourses can be understood as Moscovici's 'emancipated representations' emerging from social subgroups versed in different forms of knowledge.

To be sure, the above dynamics are not peculiar to the Greek case as such ideological 'pseudo-dilemmas' between cultural constructs are situated within wider debates over 'civilisational identities' and questions of European identity (Delanty, 2006; Huntington, 1993; Katzenstein & Checkel, 2009; Said, 1978), within which binary schemas and essentialist stereotypes of the West/Europe as rational, secular, modern, progressive and individualistic and of the East/Asia as irrational, religious, traditional, backwards, and collectivist are constantly constructed, reconstructed and deconstructed (Lewis & Wigen, 1997). Ultimately, just like the continuous objectification via dualisms outside Greek historiography, only leads to 'an ever increasing pile of issues, which we weary of or become diverted from, but never really settle' (Newell in Uleman, 1999: 141), the same appears to be the case with the 'insoluble conflict' of Greek identity (Lianeri, 2014: 71).

Nevertheless, this particular debate on Greece's hybridity holds relevance to another hegemonic binary representation of Greek European identity, namely the one between idealisation and deprecation. This double tendency operates at both the external and internal registers of identity construction and is attached upon the contrast between the 'glory of ancient Greece' and the 'decay

¹⁰ Defined as 'license or liberty taken by a poet, prose writer, or other artist in deviating from rule, conventional form, logic, or fact, in order to produce a desired effect' (Dictionary.com).

of modern Greece'. Within this framework of representation distinctions of East and West, tradition and modernity, re-emerge as dominant schemas of Greek historiography. While idealisation can lead to identity overvaluation, deprecation can end in identity devaluation. The uniting endpoint appears to return to the position of identity destabilisation. The following two sections will elaborate further on these points.

Identity overvaluation: idealisation and great expectations

The second kind of identity destabilisation that Greek European identity appears to have been experiencing is that of identity overvaluation. In social psychology, identity overvaluation stands for the favourable bias towards one's social identity, quite often in comparison to other social groups' identities, which can be a frequent feature of the national narratives that build nations (László, 2013). Identity overvaluation can lead to great expectations, which if perceived as unmet, may lead to identity deprecation. Although some would argue that identity disappointment is the endpoint of all identity endeavours (Craib, 2002), suffice to say that the greater the perceived distance from the idealised representation, the greater the disappointment (i.e. Dimou, 2013). This section will focus on the overvaluation of Greek identity and its role in European identity formation, two facets that are represented as fundamental in Greek historiography, inside and outside Greece (Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013).

Philhellenism: 'Cradle of civilisation' and 'seedbed of democracy'

Expert and political representations are often marked by the conventional wisdom that Western civilisation and European identity originated in the ancient Greek world (i.e. Coleman, 2001; Ossewaarde, 2013; Vujadinović, 2011), a narrative that constitutes the basis of Greece's identity overvaluation. Within such ideational context, the dominant positive stereotypes of Greece are those of the 'cradle of civilisation' or the 'seedbed society' (Arnason *et al.*, 2013; Kaika, 2005). For

instance, two conceptual examples ‘imbued with Hellenism’ that are frequently portrayed as pan-European political values today are those of democracy and cosmopolitanism (Camia, 2010; Canfora, 2006; Delanty, 2005; Ossewaarde, 2013). As stated (Canfora, 2006: 7), ‘the belief that democracy is a Greek invention is rather deeply rooted’, while the ancient Greek *polis* regularly features as the prototype of European democracy (Arnason *et al.*, 2013; Tsoukalas, 1999). Cosmopolitanism, the feeling of responsibility and belonging to something wider than the polis, the *cosmopolis*, is situated within the ancient Greek philosophies of the Cynics and Stoics (Bowden, 2003; Camia, 2010).

However, these representations do not stand unchallenged. For example, against any notion of national exceptionalism, it is often clarified that ancient Greek thought was only one of the main origins of European identity, the others being the Roman legal system and the Christian religion (Ossewaarde, 2013; Vujadinović, 2011). Furthermore, critiques of ancient democracy point out that ancient Greece was not a purely egalitarian place, due to the non-participation of women, children, disabled people, and non-citizens, and most importantly, the existence of slaves (Canfora, 2006; Roberts-Miller, 2002). In this sense, the *demos* of ancient democracy was more limited than imagined. Critiques of contemporary politics emphasise that the concept of democracy has changed meaning over time (Arnason *et al.*, 2013) and current forms of democratic governance in large-scale representative democracies are significantly dissimilar to the workings of the small city-state. Finally, the argument that ancient Greek writings, including those of Aristotle and Plato, are highly critical of democracy is often voiced (Arnason *et al.*, 2013; Canfora, 2006). Nevertheless, refuted or not, the representation of Greece as ‘eternal’, ‘universal’ and ‘original’ is still a persistent discursive presence (Lalaki, 2012; Lalioti, 2009).

Although the attention paid to Greece varied across time (Canfora, 2006; Reynolds, 2013) and notions of Hellenism have been versatile over the years (Lalaki, 2012; Zacharia, 2008), the historical roots of phenomena such as Philhellenism and Hellenolatry, which have been at the core of the overvaluation of Greek identity, are situated in the revival of Classicism in the Europe of the

Renaissance, the Enlightenment and Romanticism (Kaika, 2005; Kokosalakis & Psimmenos, 2002; Tsoukalas, 1999). While the focus of the Enlightenment on rationalism, empiricism and scientific inquiry was anchored to ancient Greek rationality (Vujadinović, 2011), Philhellenism was a romantic movement of Western Europeans, mostly British, French and German, who believed in the biological and cultural continuity of ancient and modern Greeks, as well as the direct link of ancient Greek and Western civilisations, two beliefs culminating in support for the Greek struggle for independence (Fleming, 2004; see volume by Beaton & Ricks, 2009). Although critics of the time, such as the Austrian historian Jacob Philipp Fallmerayer challenged this assumed racial and cultural continuity of the Greek nation (Beaton, 2009), it mattered little to the Romantic vision that revolved around the irresistible representation of the ‘noble but faded, glorious yet... reduced’ Greece in need of liberation, if it was to retrieve its former ‘splendour’ (Fleming, 2004; Roessel, 2001).

In 1770, the Greeks revolted against the Ottoman rule and although they failed to liberate themselves, they attracted the interest of Western Europe due to the mix of idealisation of the Hellenic past and the revolutionary spirit of the time, marked by the French Revolution and the nationalism that followed it (Guibernau, 2004; Roessel, 2001). These historical conditions initiated a period of Philhellenism (1770-1830) during which images of the Greeks constructed by Europeans were positive and any ‘flaws’ or ‘misgivings’ were attributed to the effects of Ottoman despotism and Oriental culture (Reynolds, 2013). In practical terms, Philhellenism manifested in numerous cases of Western-Europeans contributing funds, materials and even manpower (i.e. the poet Lord Byron, Roessel, 2001) to the Greek cause (Fleming, 2004).

[Hellenism: nation-building](#)

The Greeks, on their part, are described as accepting the historical role that was assigned to them to restore the ‘glory of Hellenism’ in the form of a modern nation-state, regardless of the paradoxical task of joining antiquity and modernity (Clogg, 2002; Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002). Authors tell us

that, since then, the Greeks took pride in this venerable heritage and felt that they were 'unique', 'special' and valued by others (Sutton, 1997; Tsoukalas, 1999). As such, in SIT terms, they were enabled by the symbolic circumstances to achieve positive self-esteem, group distinction and inter-group validation. Moreover, in terms of the European dimension of identity, it is mentioned that exactly because of the ancient tradition Greece has 'the rightful claim to be and feel quintessentially European' and holds the distinction of never having to 'invent' a European identity by having one 'by default' (Kokosalakis & Psimmenos, 2002; Mackridge, 2008). In the literature, it is often clarified that the social strata that have historically supported these views were the educated and more affluent intellectuals, commercial elites and the diaspora, who were also the social groups that played an important role in disseminating the ideas of modernity, Hellenism, and nationalism, thus stirring the revolution (Clogg, 2002; Mouzelis, 1978).

In practice, the effects of the philhellenic internalisation manifested in the appropriation by the Greeks of the crucial Western support for the cause of liberation and in the pursuit of irredentist and Hellenising strategies throughout their nation-state building undertakings (Dimitras, 1992; Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002). During the first century of its existence, Greek leadership and nationalist discourse focused on the expansion of Greece to include the Greek-speaking Christian populations that existed outside its borders, as Orthodox Christianity and Greek language were historically considered the other two pillars of Greek identity besides ancient Hellenism (Clogg, 2002; Kokosalakis & Psimmenos, 2002). This goal was referred to as the 'Great Idea' and these claimed populations of the Balkan Peninsula were named the 'unredeemed' Greek siblings that needed to be 'redeemed' through liberation (Aldcroft, 2006; Kalyvas, 2015).

The Great Idea is presented as both ambitious and necessary, since the majority of this otherwise mixed and culturally complex population lived outside the Greek Kingdom (Aldcroft, 2006; Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002). The end of the Greek irredentism came abruptly in 1922 with the Catastrophe of Asia Minor, but not before Greece succeeding in incorporating into its territory the

Ionian Islands (1864), Thessaly and Arta (1881), Greek Macedonia, Epirus, Crete and some Aegean Islands (1913), Thrace (1923), and the Dodecanese islands (1947), through various wars and treaties, and the instrumental role played by greater European powers, like Britain, France and Russia, (Kokosalakis & Psimmenos, 2002; Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013).

Over time, the Hellenising 'spirit' was expressed in various governmental and grassroots initiatives, such as the persistent archaism of the Greek language until the mid-seventies, with the use of *katharevousa*, the 'purified' version of Greek, which was the formal language of the state but not of the people who spoke the *demotiki* idiom (Mouzelis, 1978; Tsoukalas, 1999). Hellenising and homogenising tactics were employed on the ethnically and linguistically diverse populations of the acquired lands of New Greece, while the Greek state was also determined to Hellenise names of locations in those areas, erasing Albanian, Slav and Turkish place-names (Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002). Moreover, during the 19th century it was fashionable for Greek people to name their children with ancient Greek names (Clogg, 2002; Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002). In Athens, the Acropolis was re-hellenised by removing any architectural elements that were added during the Byzantine and Ottoman era (Mackridge, 2008; Makrides, 2009).

Most importantly, education strived to establish not only what was considered the proper use of language, but also the properly Western/European and simultaneously ethnocentric understanding of national history, which strived to establish the endurance of the Greek nation from ancient to modern Greece (Faas, 2011; Zervas, 2012). Historians of the 19th century, such as Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos and Spyridon Zambelios, replaced an earlier rhetoric of revivalism with one of continuity (Beaton, 2009). In this effort, two chapters of Greek history were considered problematic due to their Eastern character, the era of the Byzantium, seen as obscurantist, dogmatic and corrupted, and Ottoman rule, seen through Orientalist eyes (Kokosalakis & Psimmenos, 2002; Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002). In many respects, Greece followed the cause of nationalism and

Hellenism with more than adequate passion in the service of both Greek and European self-esteem (Tsoukalas, 1999).

Identity idealisation and mutuality

All of the above illustrate the degree to which Greek identity was subjected to processes of idealisation and overvaluation by both non-Greek Westerners and Greeks themselves. Identity overvaluation, like any other form of idealisation, can take the form of excess and fixation. In the literature, instances occur when the desire of Greeks to embody the 'Hellenistic ideal' is described as 'obsessive', best illustrated by the Greek words of *progonoplexia* and *archaiolatreia* (meaning 'ancestor obsession' and 'antiquity worship', respectively) (Clogg, 2002: 27). Roessel (2001: 3) makes the somewhat flamboyant claim that at moments in time foreigners have found it 'almost impossible to think sanely about Greece'. However, what could be the outcome and effect of identity idealisation, and how does it work?

According to psychology, the 'adoration' of others necessarily entails a parallel idealisation of the self, enabling those who idealise to introject themselves with positive self-reflections (Minsky, 1996). Under this light, the mutual idealisation between Greeks and Westerners appears like the reciprocal reinforcement of their respective collective self-esteems (Tsoukalas, 1999). Regarding the effect of overvaluation, the outcome can only be the creation and nurturing of 'great expectations'. These expectations, in all their ambition and extravaganza, foster not only the crucial identity question of *becoming*, as the ultimate and never-ending effort of all identity endeavours, but also the possible frustration of these anticipations, resulting in disappointment and identity depreciation (see i.e. theories of 'possible selves', Markus & Nurius, 1986). As such, the intense 'success' of overvaluation is equally traumatic and crisis-breeding as any identity devaluation can be, since it catapults the social entity equally far away from what is understood as moderate and balanced, and eventually as 'normal'. The following section will move deeper into the theme of identity devaluation.

Identity devaluation: great expectations and disappointment

Philhellenic fatigue and Hellenic disappointment

As much as Greek European identity was revered in the past, the future held different dynamics. After the end of the War of Independence and the establishment of the Modern Greek state, Philhellenist enthusiasm decreased considerably (Reynolds, 2013). The philhellenes who had run to Greece's liberating struggle dreaming of part-taking in the reconstitution of the Hellenic 'grandeur' are described as becoming disappointed with the reality in the newly born small kingdom of Greece (Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002). As explained, besides a few notable elite families who were well-educated and held high administrative posts, the majority of the people were poor, illiterate and landless peasants (Kokosalakis & Psimmenos, 2002; Tsoukalas, 1999).

In western-European Philhellenes' eyes, these rural people were tainted by religious and superstitious beliefs, untouched by Enlightened rationality, and appeared as a far cry from the 'civilised' and 'elegant' Hellenistic prototype, the ghost of which they had encountered in their classical studies (Kokosalakis & Psimmenos, 2002; Fleming, 2004). In this encounter between the imagination of ancient Greece and the actual inhabitants, 'the comparison was revealing, there was nothing left from that glorious past' (Laloti, 2009: 71). To be sure, such tendencies were not peculiar to the Greek case and as many critical theorists have argued all Balkan and Eastern-European countries have fallen under the orientalisng gaze of Western-Europeans (for 'Balkanism' see Todorova, 2009; for 'Euro-orientalism' see Adamovsky, 2006). By SIT's terms, these cultures were constructed as 'internal others', members of the ingroup of Europeans, but less than prototypical due to their 'backwardness' compared to the hierarchised Western-European prototype.

The initial disillusionment is represented as only growing steadily over time, as Greece's policies and agendas were met with disdain on behalf of its Western-European counterparts (Koliopoulos &

Veremis, 2002). The pursuit of the 'Great Idea' over the first century of state-building is anchored as a defining feature that played a role in this disenchantment, because although initially the Western powers aimed at creating a small Greek nation-state that would include Sterea Ellada, Peloponnisos and Cyclades, some of the regions of the ancient Greek world containing the epicentres of Athens and Sparta, Greeks aimed at a more extended Greek federation that would include the 'unredeemed' (Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002). The image that is implicitly and explicitly expressed in historiography is that of a young and poor country, with limited military forces, that was exceedingly ambitious, and perhaps even too greedy for its weight (Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002; Triandafyllidou & Paraskevopoulou, 2002). For instance, some observers of the time commented that 'Greece combined the appetites of a Russia, with the resources of a Switzerland' (Clogg, 2002: 69), while Venizelos's claims in the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 were described as 'extravagant' and 'flamboyant' and a source of exasperation (Aldcroft, 2006: 146-7).

The Great Idea is also described as having been followed by the Greek leaders at every cost (Aldcroft, 2006). For instance, the use of brigands and released convicts for fighting over northern territories was viewed unfavourably by Western powers, hurting Greece's external image (Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002). Furthermore, expansionism is charged with depriving the country of important resources that could have been used for economic advancement and leading to chronic underdevelopment (Aldcroft, 2006; Mouzelis, 1978). After decades of wars, the end of the 19th century found Greece heavily indebted, bankrupt and under an international financial control regime that lasted for several decades (Aldcroft, 2006; Triandafyllidou & Paraskevopoulou, 2002). Simultaneously, social groups derived from the powerful strata of the Ottoman era are reported to have succeeded in regaining their clientelistic influence and power base and resources were wasted by servicing corrupt and inefficient administrations (Aldcroft, 2006; Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002). Other factors that are registered as contributing to underdevelopment were the defrayment of the cost of gaining independence, lasting political instability, lack of fuel material necessary for

industrialisation, and the absence of an entrepreneurial middle class that could lead an economic revolution (Aldcroft, 2006; Mouzelis, 1978).

Another source of vivid bewilderment for Westerners is said to be the indifference and even unwillingness of Greeks towards modernising efforts. As described, Greeks seemed 'unruly' and unwilling to comply with a Western rationality and administration (Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013). The image of 'unruly Greece' in binary opposition to 'disciplined Europe' has been argued to figure as a stereotypical one and used as a representational excuse not only for foreign interventionist monarchies or subversion, but also oppressive domestic regimes, such as the 1967-1974 dictatorship and its perpetrators who claimed that 'Greeks needed a firm hand' (Herzfeld, 1997: 185). In the Orient, Turkish historiography describes Greeks as the nation that needed to be 'put in their place' and 'taught a lesson' (Cicek, 2010: 83). Outside Europe, Henry Kissinger, US diplomat, appears to be claiming that Greeks are an 'ungovernable people' (as cited in Hirschon, 2001; also, in Xenakis, 2013). In recent literature, the culture of protest, strikes and streets riots has been projected as part of Greece's 'anarchic' character and an institutionalisation of 'anti-systemic' and 'resistance politics' (Andronikidou & Kovras, 2012; Hirschon, 2001). Greeks themselves are also commented as selectively evoking the value of 'defiant independence' as and when suited, increasing the impression (Herzfeld, 1992; Xenakis, 2013).

Eventually, all these dynamics are represented as resulting in a parallel Greek frustration with the national self, anchored around the repeated failures of development and the paradoxically unmet potential of the nation's long 'apprenticeship in Europeanness' (Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002; Nicolaidis, 1997). This is described as leading to the creation of feelings of inferiority, humiliation over the country's dependent and peripheral character, and the peculiar development of a love/hate relationship with the West (Diamandouros, 1994). The 'loving' part of this liaison is symbolically attributed to the idea of the West as a European prototype that Greece needed to reach, as well as a

stereotypical protecting figure for a small and weak country like Greece (Diamandouros, 1994; Ioakimidis, 2000a).

The 'hateful' part of this relation refers to the ways in which philhellenism was perceived as being used as a pretext for Western intervention in Greek affairs and the long history of 'conditional sovereignty' (Fleming, 2004; Triandafyllidou & Paraskevopoulou, 2002), as well as traumatic events that were understood as 'Western betrayal', such as the withdrawal of support during the Asia Minor catastrophe and the role played in the Turkish invasion and subsequent division of Cyprus (Clogg, 2002). As put, 'Western approval has always been eagerly sought by the Greeks, but their addiction to the philhellenic praise turned them sour when old friends turned into critics or even foes' (Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002: 271).

Consequently, the image of Greece became that of the 'wayward child' and 'spoiled kid of European history' which implies 'immaturity, undeserved-ness and abuse of position', resulting in Greece being identified as a 'fake-European' (Herzfeld, 1989; Kostis, 2013; Rumelili, 2008). The notion of deservingness reappears repeatedly in both implicit and explicit ways in Greek historiography. Lalioti (2009) comments that, both inside and outside of Greece, criticisms for not being worthy of the past and not being equal to Europe proliferated. An observer of German philhellenism comments that there was a division between two camps, the somewhat apologetic inclusionary one placing Greeks in the European side, albeit recognizing a developmental gap, and the polemical exclusionary one locating Greeks in the Orient (Reynolds, 2013). The latter camp, 'commonly associated the contemporary Greeks with Balkan peoples or Orientals, refuting their Hellenic tradition and claiming it as their own' (Reynolds, 2013: 86). From a Turkish perspective (Cicek, 2010), Greeks were undeserving because they owed their existence not to heroic bravery but to naïve philhellenism and unjust wars and because they were nothing but a nation of lawless brigands and warlords (see also Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002: chapter 11 on brigandage).

The European Union as a 'return to Europe'

The accession to the EEC historically features as an opportunity for Greece to be reintegrated in Europe and regain its 'Europeaness' (Clogg, 2002; Dimitras, 1992). However, Greece's trajectory within it only exacerbated the negative external identity of the country. For Konstantinos Karamanlis, the pioneering politician who pushed Greece's membership forward, entering the Community was seen as a vehicle of democratic consolidation after the Colonels' regime ended in 1974, as well as a chance for economic growth and a reassurance of territorial security in light of Greece's tainted relations with Turkey (Kokosalakis & Psimmenos, 2002). There is a historical argument that security concerns overshadowed everything else, which reinforces the view that the West/Europe was always seen by Greece as a protecting option (Economides, 2005). Furthermore, EEC membership was thought of as a way for a small country like Greece to partake in transnational decision-making processes and play a role in regional and global affairs (Kranidiotis, 2000).

However, only a few months after Greece formally entered the EEC in 1981, the PASOK of Andreas Papandreou came to power and remained in charge for the next fifteen years, with an interruption between 1990 and 1993 (Lyrintzis, 2006). PASOK started as a radical leftist formation with anti-Western, Third World and anti-EEC rhetorical elements, although its radicalism mellowed over time (Bideleux, 1996b; Lyrintzis, 2006). Papandreou is often described as a charismatic and seductive leader whose rhetoric emphasised the rights of the 'non-privileged' and as a consequence, Greek citizens are correspondingly portrayed as prone to demagoguery and addicted to such types of leadership, which implies lack of political maturity and sophistication (Bideleux, 1996b; Diamandouros, 1994; Lyrintzis, 2006). Overall, Papandreou is represented as a 'destructive, destabilising force in Greek politics' (Draenos, 2012: 166). Alternatively, PASOK is also represented as one of 'the most politically successful social democratic parties in Europe' (Tsakalotos, 1998: 114) and is credited as incorporating into the power system social groups that never before had any

significant power (Lyrantzis, 2006), which indicates the controversial and contested representations of both leader and party.

The eighties under Papandreou became known as 'the populist decade' and have determined the image that Greece would occupy within the Community ever since (Clogg, 2002; Lyrantzis, 2006). Phrases that denote this image are the 'black sheep' (Economides, 2005: 471), the 'odd one out' (Mossialos & Mitsos, 2000: 4), the 'incurable sick man of Europe' (Ioakimidis in Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002: 317), the 'awkward and heretical EU partner' (Ioakimidis, 2000a: 360), the 'difficult partner' (Eyal in Bideleux, 1996b: 138), the 'inherently uncomfortable and truculent member' (Bideleux, 1996b: 130), or simply 'a lost cause' (Featherstone, 2005: 224). The reasons behind these rather crystallised identity schemas are mostly anchored around economic performance and foreign policy (Economides, 2005). Within this identity representation rests the argument that Greece's Europeanisation necessitates successful outcomes not only in processes of Westernisation and modernisation, two words that are often used interchangeably with 'Europeanisation', but also expressions such as 'normalisation', 'rehabilitation', 'denationalisation' and 'multilateralisation' (i.e. Economides, 2005; Kazamias, 1997). In this sense, becoming Europeanised and Westernised is presented as becoming more of a 'normal' country that has been rehabilitated from 'non-Europeanness'.

In terms of economic performance, Greek economy was lagging behind other EEC economies and could not fully maximise the potential benefits of its membership because necessary reforms and adjustments were resisted or delayed (Bideleux, 1996b). During Papandreou's administration public debt figures rose dramatically. While in 1970 public debt was 17.6% of GDP, it rose to 28.3% by 1981 and took a wild leap to 112% by 1986, that is, during the first five years of PASOK's administration (Ioakimidis, 2000b). Papandreou is reported to have pursued a wild expansionary fiscal policy to satisfy the pressing social demands, which increased public expenditure from 30% of GNP in 1980 to

42% in 1985 (Ioakimidis, 2000b). Furthermore, employment in the public sector is said to have risen dramatically as the clientilistic system took deep roots in Greek society.

This set of expansionary policies were described as being at odds with the fiscal policies followed by the rest of Europe and with the macroeconomic policy guidelines that the European Commission recommended to EU member-states, framed as noticeably ignored by Greece at least until 1985 (Ioakimidis, 2000b). The results of this disregard are said to be uncontrollable public deficits, combined with rising public debt and a bloated public sector (Ioakimidis, 2000b) and the Greek economy being characterised as 'the most divergent in the EU' based on the Maastricht criteria (Featherstone, 2005: 227). On the positive side, material prosperity is described as having increased (Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013). The two main reasons that are mentioned for the delay of institutional reforms and economic adjustments are the political cost for the parties that would lose their chance to be re-elected and the socio-economic cost to the vulnerable strata (Arghyrou, 2000; Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013).

Foreign policy appears to have played an even more instrumental role in Greece's external image, although some argue that external constructions were 'partly justified and partly exaggerated' (Ioakimidis, 2000a: 360). Papandreou is described as a particularly disagreeable and instrumentally oriented leader who pressurised the EEC on more than one occasions, aiming to increase the flow of funds towards Greece (Bideleux, 1996b). There has been a notion that Greece's accession 'made voting together more difficult because of the insistence of the Greeks in sticking to long-held national positions at the expense of Community solidarity' (Nuttal in Ioakimidis, 2000a: 360). Furthermore, various Greek positions were perceived as particularly nationalist and anti-Western. For example, efforts to deny the right of the FYROM to choose for itself the name 'Macedonia' and the unilateral imposition of a trade boycott on the new nation-state isolated Greece from its European partners who tried to bring Greece to the European Court (Bideleux, 1996b; Sutton, 1997). Moreover, Greece's reactions to external interventions in Yugoslavia and lack of cooperation on the

matter were interpreted as an 'unholy alliance' based on cultural and religious ties which additionally hurt the international identity of Greece (Economides, 2005: 481).

After Papandreou's death in 1996, Konstantinos Simitis, a proclaimed modernizer, substituted him as the leader of PASOK, and paved the way for EMU membership. The second half of the nineties is described as constituting a 'massive transformation' in Greek foreign policy and a 'rehabilitation period from the Papandreou years' (Economides, 2005: 471-472). Authors writing at the turn of the century were expressing the view that Greek society was 'characterised by an all embracing trend for reform' triggered by the 'EMU factor' (Mossialos & Mitsos, 2000: 3). The EMU membership was portrayed as a valuable step in belonging to the deeply integrated European core (Alogoskoufis, 2000; Kranidiotis, 2000). While many expressed either reserved or open optimism regarding Greece's ability to meet the EMU criteria and its wider prospects within it, others expressed reservations whether Greece could survive the EMU environment, absorb shocks and achieve growth without autonomous monetary policy (Alogoskoufis, 2000; Christodoulakis, 2000; Garganas, 2000).

However, many argue that Simitis's reformist policy was not brave enough (Alogoskoufis, 2000), while the circumstances under which Greece entered the monetary union with the use of falsified economic data shed a particularly dark light upon his legacy (Knight, 2011). The two-thousands are represented as a period of Euphoria for Greece during which EMU membership enabled cheap and easy public and private borrowing, which created the illusion of growth and prosperity, concealing the country's underlying economic problems (Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013). Many credit the moment of the Olympics of 2004 in Athens as the peak of this period, a successfully organised event that was symbolically associated with the dual celebration of Hellenism and belongingness to the developed world (Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013). However, the same year the scandal of the Greek 'cooking of the financial books' became publicly known and led to speculation regarding the possibility of expulsion from the Eurozone (Marconi, 2011). This was not the first, or last thereof, time that Greece's

position within European institutions would be seen in a precarious manner and subject to possible loss, as will be shown next.

Identity deficit: is there a Greek European identity after all?

As indicated above, there has been a historical debate on Greece's deservingness to be European with some arguing that Greece does not deserve to be called European. To the extent that such arguments become a matter of ideological closure or perhaps even nihilistic conclusions, Greece's undeservingness and status as a 'fake European' becomes one of 'lack of Europeanness' in the sense that Greece is not European at all. Ultimately, following this logic, Greece is seen as suffering from an 'absence of Europeanness' and as such, a deficit of European identity (Clogg, 2002). In SIT terms, Greece is not only a less than prototypical ingroup member, but instead it is an outgroup member in disguise, a 'Trojan Horse'. In other words, it does not belong.

Lack of belongingness can function as a deficit of identity because all social identity, as already explained in the theoretical chapter, is relational. In this sense, the one who does not belong anywhere and is seen as unable to relate to anyone, becomes not only unrecognised, but also *unrecognisable* by others, resulting in the loss of identity. Although this particular point refers to Greece's European identity dimension, the sense of loss and deficit as a distinct possibility is observable in Greek historiography, including the national dimension of Greece's identity, anchored around the question 'what is particularly Greek after all?'. This goes hand in hand with the identity question 'where does Greece belong', which is seen as never-ending in Greek studies (Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013: 15). The remaining section will elaborate on all these different shades of absence.

Western belonging as a 'loss'

As already mentioned above, Greece was once considered to be foundational of Western civilisation. However, this is merely conventional knowledge and an alternative representation in Greek studies is the idea that it was not Greece who was the producer of the West, but rather the other way around: the West was the producer of Greece (Mouzelis, 1978; Tsoukalas, 1999). From a Turkish perspective (Sarinay & Sünbül, 2000: 200), Greece was the '*mutant* product of the propagative politics of the imperialist powers in Europe'. While such views rely on the historical role of Western powers in the establishment of the Modern Greek state (Clogg, 2002), including material help and intervention in favour of Greece, there is an additional question of the symbolic production of the country's identity (Laloti, 2009). Some would argue that Greece was the mere by-product of the West's attempt to invent its own identity (Castano, 2004; Fleming, 2004; Laloti, 2009; Tsoukalas, 1999). Within this view, it is argued that the idea of Greece was used to create the impression of a 'European soul' that dated back to the era of Pericles (Castano, 2004; Fleming, 2004). As put, 'Europeans... tended to flatter themselves by discovering their own idealised cultural ancestors in ancient Greece' (Tsoukalas, 1999: 8). Moreover, it has been argued that 'European expansionism and domination was based on the construction and appropriation of the racist myth of an eternally superior and indigenous proto-European civilisation' whereby 'Hellenolatry' served as a powerful ideological weapon for expanding European power (Tsoukalas, 1999: 8).

The sense of loss and deficit is additionally exacerbated by the argument that Greece has lost more than it gained in its relation with the West, not only because of the way its identity may have been appropriated, but also the ways that Greece's image was predominantly a matter of others, rather than an agency of its own (Laloti, 2009). The sense of greater loss than gain was obvious, for instance, in the disappointment of a Western observer of the Greek-Turkish war of 1919-1922 who stated that the liberal vision of a 'regenerated Hellas' was one of the 'extravagances of Western philhellenism' and the attraction of the West to Greece was a 'curse that the West ha[d] set upon

Greece', which led to the country's 'spiritual pauperisation' and was responsible for 'what Greece ha[d] lost, or failed to win' (as cited in Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002: 263).

This representation additionally resonates with the frequent portrayal of Greece as a 'haunted' country, incapable of escaping its own image, living under 'the burden of history' and being unable to cope with it (Laloti, 2009; Lianeri, 2014; Tsoukalas, 1999). For example, Laloti (2009: 72) queries 'how do you handle being so exclusively universal?'. This 'weight of history' is often implicitly credited as the root of modern identity deficit in the sense that it complicated the already obscure issue of defining what Greek statehood and nationhood were (Tsoukalas, 1999: 7). Often the 'imported' image of Greece is presented as guilty of eradicating Greek identity (Laloti, 2009; Tsoukalas, 1999). As argued (Laloti, 2009: 71), 'what European travellers imagined to have found [in Greece] was a loss, which although a historical one, they perceived as a synchronic lack of culture... either in treating Greeks as living ancestors or as uncultured Orientals, they denied them having a culture'.

Some have also implicitly or explicitly expressed the view that the original, chronic and excessive dependence of Greece to Western powers, who responded with what is described as interventionist or even imperialist attitudes, inhibited the self-understanding and indigenous development of the country's identity (Kokosalakis & Psimmenos, 2002; Mouzelis, 1978). Within this representation, incidents that are understood as doing so include the fact that Greece started as a dependent and indebted country, its first political parties were called the British, the French and the Russian, was ruled by foreign monarchies that were imposed from outside, such as the Bavarian King Otto and the Danish King George, and was intervened by various foreign powers on multiple occasions (Clogg, 2002; Kokosalakis & Psimmenos, 2002). In line with these, the representation holds that exactly because of repeated intervention on behalf of the West in Greek affairs, combined with Greek inability to escape its dependent status, led to identity deficit by eliminating the ways that Greece could develop not only a self-understanding of its own, but also an autonomous governance that

would allow for its empirical self-determination. As such, this particular deficit appears to be historically anchored not in a deficit of relationality and disassociation, but in a surplus of relationality that ends up obscuring any agency of the dependent party.

Expulsion from the EU and exclusion from 'Europe'

On more than one occasions, Greece was the EU member-state that some politicians, journalists and academics, the ideational leaders of our theory, would express the opinion that it should be excluded from the EC/EU/EMU on the basis of various misconducts. In SIT terms, Greece was on various occasions constructed as an outgroup member. Especially during the Macedonia debacle 'some unofficial voices... suggested that [it...] was an opportunity for the EU to get rid of one of its more irritating and economically unproductive members' (Sutton, 1997: 417; see also Economides, 2005). At another moment, a frustrated Jacques Delors, president of the European Commission, said that he would be 'happy to see Greece leave' (as cited in Ioakimidis, 2000a: 360). A 1994 journalistic article called 'Europe's Trojan Horse' concluded that:

'The Greeks in short, have found in the EC a new kind of decaying Ottoman empire and, at least in some sense a new kind of slavery. If Byron were alive today, and looking at the ruination caused by the EC-funded Athens metro, he might dream again that Greece might be free; and perhaps that we in the rest of the EC might be free of them.' (as cited in Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002: 274)

Political scientist, Robert Bideleux (1996b: 137-8), stated the following:

'The prevailing 'ethnic' conception of the Greek nation [...] is profoundly at odds with the 'civic' and multi-cultural conceptions of nationhood that prevail in Western Europe and is much closer to that of its Balkan neighbours. Just as this inherently exclusive and intolerant conception of nationhood could become the most fundamental long-term obstacle to the eventual inclusion of the post-communist Balkan states in the EU, so it should raise thorny questions as to whether Greece really deserves to be a full member of the EU.'

Many refer to the fact that Greece was neither economically, nor politically qualified to enter the EC, but was admitted regardless of reservations (Hibou, 2005; Kokosalakis & Psimmenos, 2002). More

precisely, Greece was fully admitted in the EEC without undergoing any institution-transforming conditionality, in contrast to Spain and Portugal that underwent at least some preparation (Copsey, 2015). This led to a paradoxical, and quite unsuccessful, post-accession conditionality, whereby the EU needed to impose binding constraints on Greece, and the southern member-states, offering additional resources as an incentive (Copsey, 2015).

As explained, Greece was included in the EEC on a purely political logic as a demonstration of support for the newly established democracies of Southern Europe, but Greece entered earlier than Portugal and Spain as a single entry (Hibou, 2005). Some argue that the issue was particularly symbolic and related to the civilisational overvaluation described in the previous section. As recalled (Fourest, 2010: see also, Marconi, 2011), 'Europe opened its doors to Greece as a symbol: to have among its members the country where democracy was born' and for 'paying a historical debt to Greece as the foundation stone of European culture' (Barber, 2011). Marconi (2011: 8) argues that 'it was the entry of Greece into the European Union that provided the occasion for the Brussels institutions to trumpet their claim to be uncompromisingly democratic'. However, over time Greece appears to have become the indebted one, not only in the literal sense, but also symbolically as pending to deliver the potential of a 'normalised' member-state and to eradicate the disparity between 'promise and performance, capability and expectations' (Economides, 2005; Nicolaidis, 1997).

Belonging nowhere?

If Greece was a mere by-product of the West, the possibility of answering what is a distinctly Greek identity becomes elusive. This becomes even more elusive if one considers the historical urge on the Greek side to eradicate its Oriental roots, found in the Byzantine and Ottoman traditions, a large part of its historical life, in the service of the acquisition of a 'truly' Western/European identity. For example, some historians note that the 'archaeological cleansing' of the Acropolis by various foreign

administrators of what was seen as 'the remains of barbarity' has impoverished its cultural heritage in a more devastating way than numerous sieges or Lord Elgin's looting (Mackridge, 2008). To be sure, such attitudes are not entirely irrelevant to the ways that Europeans/Westerners have often downplayed their Eastern origins, historically and culturally (Hobson, 2004).

Most importantly, at the symbolic level, if Greece abandoned its Oriental identity, making an overambitious, ambivalent and ultimately unsuccessful leap towards the West, perhaps the case is that standing in the middle, left Greece with nothing: not belonging to the West, or the East, thus nowhere. This becomes obvious in the way historians, depending on their inclination, treat the question of Greece with all fractions criticising and disqualifying Greece on different grounds. For example, Classicists look at Greece's modern sequel with a 'disapproving eye', Byzantinologists 'ridicule the modern Greek efforts to Hellenise it', and Orientalists 'have never really forgiven the Greeks for turning their face away from Ottoman Orient' (Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002: 8).

Furthermore, this deficit of belongingness, which operates as a deficit of identification with any other group identity, is observed in the discourse of Greek exceptionalism, according to which Greece is not only constructed as an atypical Western or Eastern country, but also as an atypical Mediterranean or Balkan country, the two European regions that could constitute its closest ingroups (Clogg, 2002). For instance, while frequently Greece may be described as part of a particular European area containing member-states like Spain and Portugal and similarities between them are often illustrated, the predominant representation differentiates them and emphasises the exceptionality of Greece compared to its Mediterranean counterparts. In this respect, while Greece and Portugal in particular are often grouped together because of comparable economic difficulties, peripheral status and small size, authors clarify that the defining difference between them is that while Portugal has been a EU-friendly nation-state and able to maintain 'good housekeeping', Greece has not succeeded in either (Bideleux, 1996b: 143). As such, the created schema illustrates that these two countries 'perfectly epitomised the bad and good pupil of Europe' (Hibou, 2005: 230).

Within the Balkans, Greece is argued to be 'peculiar' because all other Balkan countries were excluded from European history and scientific inquiry in contrast to Greece, while Greece was also constructed as a cultural threat for them due to the hegemony of Greek language and Orthodoxy (Mishkova, 2008: 244). As a result, it becomes apparent that exceptional entities are essentially lonely and excluded entities that exist outside the shared communion with others.

Summary and conclusion

This chapter used the 'rigatino approach' to brush through impressions of Greek historiography in an attempt to scan for 'signs of crisis'. It begun by arguing that although in Greek studies 'identity crisis' is understood as an integral part of Greek history and society, little thought had been dedicated in the past on the diversity and multidimensionality of such recurring 'identity crisis'. It then proceeded to remedy this shortcoming by applying this study's theoretical contribution, namely, the typology of identity destabilisations, on Greek historiographical accounts. The exploration revealed traces of different destabilising dynamics at the multiple registers of conflict, overvaluation, devaluation and deficit.

The first section focused on identity conflict, as this is objectified in Greek historiography in recurring dualities. Dualism appeared to be a continuous and dominant schema in the production of knowledge about Greece. This dualism first appeared to be manifested in the idea of a timeless identity divide between East and West, as two civilisational constructs. However, this pattern emerged as not peculiar to Greece alone, since several other national identities inside and outside Europe appeared to be experiencing the same historical chasm. As such, this duality could be understood as a dynamic arising from representations of large-scale forces, such as modernisation, global conflict, international interventions, and cultural and ideological conflicts. This initial separation appeared to crystallise in what was called here 'the Diamandouros thesis' of cultural dualism and the ideotypical constructs of modernizers and underdogs. Within this thesis, the original

duality of these two political cultures appears to reproduce itself upon ever-more dualities that operate through various schematisations, such as oppositions, presence-absence, antitheses and qualitative differences. It is then argued that all these patterns can be understood as 'binary oppositions' that further amount to the representation of 'hybridity'. Moreover, this representation of hybridity is predominantly understood as a 'problem' to solve or eradicate, rather than embrace and encourage, allowing only narrow space for emancipated discourses from alternative views, such as poetry and literature.

The second section looked at identity overvaluation, externally constructed through symbolic and applied Philhellenism and internally embraced through Hellenism and nation-building. Greece appeared to hold an influential and enchanting spectrum over Western Europeans who were said to idealise the ancient Greek past and seek its revival through liberation of Modern Greeks from the Ottoman rule and the formation of a Modern Greek nation-state. Greeks themselves are described as accepting this identity overvaluation and striving to create a modern nation-state by various Hellenising strategies. The identity destabilisation appeared to spring from the creation of 'great expectations' that necessarily distance a social entity from a balanced self-assessment, leading to overvaluation.

The third section moved directly into the frustration of these 'great expectations' by means of the Philhellenist decline in Europe and what was described to be a similarly intense disappointment of Greeks with themselves, regarding what was perceived as a long and unsuccessful apprenticeship in Europeaness. On the part of external representations, the outcomes of these symbolic dynamics resulted in various historical stereotypes of Greece as 'wayward', 'unruly', 'spoiled' and 'undeserving'. On the part of Greece, they are described as creating a love/hate perception of Europe and of the West, whereby the stereotypical roles of 'saviour' and 'abuser' are dynamically interchanged with each other. Greece's accession to the EEC is framed in scholarly discourse as a 'return to Europe', hence a chance for the country to regain its European identity, and an

opportunity to achieve modernisation, development and security. However, this experience is described as only exacerbating Greece's image, particularly because of economic administration and foreign policy. As a consequence, at two different episodes of Greece's history Greek European identity is described as falling short of the prototypical understanding of what a European country should be.

The final fourth section explored historiography for signs of identity deficits. Some of the primary deficits observed were the loss of Greece to the West by being designated as a 'mere by-product' of Western inventionism, becoming universalised or losing its sovereignty on various occasions. Within an EU context, an additional source of identity loss appeared to be arguments in favour of Greece's expulsion or departure that would result in losing established parts of its European belonging, such as formal membership. Finally, there were historical representations presenting Greece as departing from both Western and Eastern prototypicality, leaving its identity in a 'no man's land', while representations of it as either exceptional or atypical compared to its various cultural groupings, such as the Balkans or the Mediterranean countries, may have resulted in the country being depicted as belonging nowhere, hence experiencing an identification deficit.

This chapter overviewed past representations of Greek identity and noted various intervals where conflicts, overvaluations, devaluations and deficits were present in them. As such, it concludes that representations of 'identity crises' can be found in Greek historiography, not only in abundance, but also in great diversity. This chapter further looked at historiographical representations of Greece and its identity in an effort to understand past identity formations and to allow for a point of departure, contextualisation and comparative potential of Greek European identity before and after the economic crisis. The next chapter will look at scholarly and media representations of Greece during the economic crisis to elucidate continuities and changes over time.

Chapter 4

Greek European Identity and the Greek Debt/Eurozone Crisis

'...[c]rises are representations and hence 'constructions' of failure. A given constellation of contradictions and failures within the institutions [...] can sustain a multiplicity of conflicting narratives of crisis. Such narratives compete in terms of their ability to find resonance with individuals' and groups' direct, lived experiences, and not in terms of their 'scientific' adequacy as explanations for the condition they diagnose'

(Hay, 1996: 255)

'Representations sometimes call our very identities into question. We struggle over them because they matter – and these are contests from which serious consequences can flow. They define what is 'normal', who belongs, - and therefore, who is excluded'

(Hall, 1997: 10)

Introduction

While the previous chapter focused on representations and stereotypes of Greek European identity before the economic crisis, as these were articulated in historiography, the present chapter looks at representations of the Euro crisis and Greece's role within it. The economic crisis has triggered an enormous production of texts by multiple actors. A large part of recent research has focused on the social construction of the Euro crisis (Picard, 2015; also, Joris *et al.*, 2014; Murray-Leach *et al.*, 2014) and the Greek debt crisis more specifically (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Kutter, 2014; Tzogopoulos, 2013) in the media, as this domain has been the primary context for the discussion of the Euro crisis and Greece within it (Joris *et al.*, 2014). New research indicates that there have been 'strikingly similar

[Euro] crisis narratives across the continent' (Murray-Leach *et al.*, 2014: 1). The social representations of Greece's crisis have been explored in multiple national media of various European countries, including Germany, UK, France, Spain, Poland, Italy, Austria, Slovakia, Denmark, and Sweden, as well as international media from USA, China, India, Japan, Korea, and Singapore (Antoniades, 2012; Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Chalaniova, 2014; Kutter, 2014; Lampropoulou, 2014; Mitsikopoulou & Lykou, 2015; Mylonas, 2012; Touri & Rogers, 2013; Tracy, 2012; Tseronis, 2015; Tzogopoulos, 2013).

Latest research widely agrees that there are two main metanarratives¹¹ of the Euro crisis (Kutter, 2014; Mitsikopoulou & Lykou, 2015; Ntampoudi, 2013; Touri & Rogers, 2013; Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013). Some have named these 'the debt' and 'the EMU' stories (Kutter, 2014), the 'state debt' and 'the Eurozone' crises (Sommer, 2014), the 'local financial' and the 'systemic' crises (Mitsikopoulou & Lykou, 2015), the 'economistic' and the 'political' explanations (Touri & Rogers, 2013), the 'internal' and 'external' explanations (Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013), or the 'the periphery' and 'the core' narratives (Ntampoudi, 2013). For the purposes of this analysis they will be called 'domestic' and 'international'. We can understand the differing naming as an exhibition of the different objects around which the same metanarratives are objectified, i.e. debt, EMU, economy, politics. These objects crystallise as central master ideas that animate these metanarratives, transforming the abstract conception of the Euro crisis into a more concrete cognitive schema. These two central crisis metanarratives constitute an objectifying *ontologisation* of the crisis, in the sense of trying to decipher the ontology of the economic crisis and explain to the public its origins and causes. Furthermore, these two metanarratives provide the discursive context within which Greece and its national European identity is represented.

¹¹ Metanarrative is defined here as 'a set of more or less logically interconnected assumptions made in order to provide a coherent and comprehensive account of the underlying mechanisms that shape, or are supposed to shape, both the constitution and the development of human existence in a fundamental way' (Susen, 2015: cxi).

The *domestic* metanarrative emphasises that the root causes of the Greek crisis are to be found predominantly in domestic dynamics that include excessive debt accumulation, misappropriation of public funds, overspending, corruption, clientelism, patronage, nepotism, tax-evasion, belated modernisation, chronic resistance to reforms, and lack of a productive base (Diamandouros, 2013; Touri & Rogers, 2013). At the government level, political elites are held responsible for over-borrowing in order to sustain a bloated public sector for the purposes of re-election, stealing public funds, allowing tax-evasion, lacking the political will to implement reforms and capacity to create a sustainable self-sufficient economy (Featherstone, 2011; Kutter, 2014). At the grassroots level, citizens are held responsible for supporting the aforementioned governance, evading taxes, stealing public funds when possible, participating wilfully in the clientelistic system, blocking reforms by street protests and other means, living beyond their means, and being unproductive (Diamandouros, 2013; Tekin, 2014). As other EU countries, such as Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Italy and Cyprus, showed crisis symptoms (Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013), and although the particular debt dynamics differed from country to country (Stein, 2011), this metanarrative constituted the domestically-oriented explanation of the wider Euro crisis which placed responsibility for the crisis within the political, economic and cultural conditions of domestic politics.

The *international* metanarrative emphasises that the EMU was a flawed and risky currency area because it joined together diverse economies and political systems, while it was created without the necessary foundations that would sustain a monetary union, such as fiscal and political union, or any institutional design and contingency measures that could manage a potential crisis (Touri & Rogers, 2013; Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, this metanarrative stresses the systemic nature of the EMU, arguing that surpluses of trade in the European North necessarily translated into deficits in the South (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Kotarski, 2012). In other words, the expansion of productivity and exports in highly industrialised and developed EU countries directly related to loss of productivity and growth of imports in the less developed member-states, creating 'uneven development' (Hadjimichalis, 2011). Moreover, German and French banks are seen as responsible for creating

large debts in the European South by ‘exporting credit dependence to others’ (Featherstone, 2011: 200; Mylonas, 2015; Sommer, 2014). At the global level, the international metanarrative also includes the critique against the global financial system, especially the banks, and world capitalism, as well as the contemporary criticism against economic neo-liberalism (Mylonas, 2015; Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013). The main argument of these critiques asserts that these overarching international structures and ideologies protect the capital and the market at the expense of protecting ordinary citizens’ livelihoods or human and labour rights (Mylonas, 2015). Within this metanarrative, the Greek crisis is understood as a symptom of a wider problem with international dimensions (Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013).

This chapter follows the guiding light of the four types of destabilisations to explore emerging research and media texts for representations of Greek European identity during the economic crisis, as well as to trace representations of identity destabilisations. As will become apparent, the two crisis metanarratives are often intertwined with the particular construction of Greece’s external identity in international media and political statements, while the public discourse is enriched by multiple representational features, such as objectifications of metaphors, dilemmas and stereotypes. Crisis ‘symptoms’ are traceable within all four registers of our typology. The remaining chapter will analyse them in detail.

Identity conflict: dualist revivals and intensification

Domestic conflicts

Some of the main implications of Greece’s economic crisis have been social unrest and the representation of Greece as a country in conflict within itself (Andronikidou & Kovras, 2012; Psimitis, 2011). This representation of conflict operates in multiple levels and we can identify three key domains: 1) between the political elites and the citizens, 2) between different political elites within the political system, and 3) between varied social groups of Greek citizens within the wider society.

Regarding the first dividing line between political elites and ‘the people’, which constitutes the defining storyline of the ideology of populism (Kaltwasser, 2012) and of the Greek ‘underdog’ political culture (Diamandouros, 1994), several researchers have observed that there has been an increase of pre-existing populist political discourse and public support for populist parties during the economic crisis (Pappas & Aslanidis, 2015; Doxiadis & Matsaganis, 2012). Additional empirical examples that indicate the chasm between elites and citizens include the numerous protests and sit-ins that repeatedly took place in front of the Greek Parliament, especially during the parliamentary voting of reforms and austerity measures, as well as incidents of physical and verbal assaults against political personnel (Dinas & Rori, 2013). Politicians, such as PASOK ministers have openly blamed citizens for the causes of the crisis (Liakos & Kouki, 2015). In terms of metanarratives, studies have argued that domestic explanations have been promoted systematically, by both Greek politicians and media, in order to legitimise austerity policies (Doudaki, 2015; Liakos & Kouki, 2015; Mylonas, 2014).

As recent studies establish, ‘crisis populism’ in Greece appears on both the left and right wings of the political spectrum, as well as both fringe and mainstream political parties, which perpetuates the pre-established representation of populism as a ubiquitous element in Greek politics (Pappas & Aslanidis, 2015; Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013). The dominant expert understanding of populism in Greece is that of an age-old and deeply-rooted phenomenon that has only come to intensify further during the crisis (Pappas & Aslanidis, 2015; Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013). For example, authors speak of ‘Greece’s populist saga’ and its continuation during the economic crisis (Pappas & Aslanidis, 2015: 181) or refer to populism as the recurring ‘bedrock of the Greek political system’ (Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013: 3). Simultaneously, media and political actors present populism as pervasive and dangerous for political life (Stavrakakis, 2014). For instance, a journalist went as far as spiritedly stating that ‘if populism was a religion, Greece would be Pakistan’ (as cited in Stavrakakis, 2014: 509). In this sense, representations of ideological conflict in Greece after the crisis were anchored to pre-existing

representations of pre-established social cleavages, creating an image of qualitative continuation, but change in degree and intensity.

Moving on to the second conflict domain among political elites, we further need to differentiate it between a) interparty conflict and b) intraparty conflict. Regarding the first, interparty animosity and mutual blaming were prominent during the crisis (Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013). Political leaders are found to have engaged in blame-shifting strategies with the two dominant political parties of PASOK and ND attributing blame to each other for not being capable to implement reforms over the years (Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013). SYRIZA was consistently the greatest critic of PASOK and ND within the parliament, blaming them for the crisis (Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013).

In terms of internal party dynamics, political parties themselves suffered strong internal divisions due to heated disagreements on austerity and reform policy with several episodes of voluntary desertion or even enforced expelling of MPs (Dinas & Rori, 2013). In this respect, both political elites and journalists have often explicitly represented Greek parties as going through 'identity crises'¹². For example, journalist Antonis Panoutsos, writing for the *Proto Thema* (2014), comments that 'we have two parties in identity crisis. ND trying to prove domestically that it is an anti-Memorandum party, and SYRIZA trying to prove abroad that it is a party friendly to foreign investors'.

These occurrences and representations exemplify the depth of conflict, fragmentation and dispersion of the Greek representative system, which in effect destabilised governance and challenged Greece's capability to project a united clear voice, thus a consistent external identity, to the outer world (Featherstone, 2012; Verney, 2014). Although there were some occasions of coalition governments for the sake of resolving governing dead-ends, including the establishment of a technocratic government led by Lucas Papademos, these initiatives were short-lived and led to public condemnation accompanied by the 'political death' of the smaller parties that agreed to these

¹² For SYRIZA see Nikos Filis, Minister of Education, in Tribune, 2015; for PASOK see Terence Quick, member of ANEL, in Zougla, 2014; for ND see Mpregianni, 2015.

political syntheses, as was the case with LAOS and DIMAR (Dinas & Rori, 2013; Hindmoor & McConnell, 2015; Verney, 2014).

These profound disagreements and lack of acceptance for political cooperation were largely and conventionally interpreted as symptoms of Greece's political culture as one that primarily favours division and disagreement, rather than consensus and collaboration (Hindmoor & McConnell, 2015). This resonates with pre-existing and wider examinations of political cultures that juxtapose 'coalitional' or 'consensus-building' cultures, such as those of Germany and the Nordic countries and 'contradictive' cultures, such as those of Greece, Italy or Poland (Getimis *et al.*, 2014: 303; Ioannidis, 2011). In the context of Greece within the economic crisis, this contrast is openly evoked (i.e. Katsounaki, 2016). As put, 'politics is high-adrenaline stuff – Greece is not Scandinavia' (Tsoukalis, 2012: 33).

Regarding divisions within the wider Greek society, it is worth noting that several protests were marked by violent encounters between demonstrators and the riot police (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou, 2013). Immediately after the voting of the first Memorandum in 2010, three bank employees died, among them a pregnant woman, after protestors set a Marfin Bank branch on fire with Molotov cocktails (Psimitis, 2011). Moreover, such protests have most often been characterised by the destruction of public and private property, and the disruption of economic life (Doxiadis & Matsaganis, 2012), turning Greek citizens against each other. In addition, the rise of the Golden Dawn and the violent attacks on immigrants and Greek citizens who expressed anti-fascist opinions, such as the murder of musician Pavlos Fyssas by a Golden Dawn supporter or the assault of two female parliamentarians by a Golden Dawn parliamentarian on national television (Angouri & Wodak, 2014; Dinas & Rori, 2013), have also increased the image of a country in ideological and occasionally physical conflict. Finally, some social groups, such as public sector employees, unionists and pensioners have been prominent culprits in the blaming discourse of the economic crisis (Kotarski, 2012; Tracy, 2012), which may install further divisions within Greek society.

Revival of dualisms

Nevertheless, as was illustrated in the previous chapter, the image of Greece as a country in conflict is not a new representation and narratives of national chasms have been diachronically dominant. Often in public discourses of the crisis (i.e. Chatzis, 2015), these antagonisms have been referred to as ‘the new national division’ evoking the historical *National Schism* between Royalists and Venizelists or the polarised disagreements between Deliyannis and Trikoupi (Clogg, 2002). According to SRT, anchoring of current phenomena to older historical ones assists with their comprehension by creating a familiar parallelism.

All these dynamics of populism, subversive politics and radicalism have been understood as an expression of the aforementioned ‘underdog culture’ of Greece (Diamandouros, 1994). Many have argued that the theory of cultural dualism has been revitalised after the onset of the crisis to become the widely accepted explanatory framework (Triantafyllidou *et al.*, 2013; Xenakis, 2013). As such, the economic crisis has often been represented as a failure of modernisation and reform and the populist underdog culture has been blamed for the malfunction of the country (Liakos & Kouki, 2015; Triantafyllidou *et al.*, 2013).

Simultaneously, the underdog culture has not only been represented as the cause of the crisis, but also as its intensified outcome since the resulting impoverishment created more underprivileged populations, therefore it increased the feelings of victimhood that characterise the underdog experience (Diamandouros, 2013; Doxiadis & Matsaganis, 2012), while claims of loss of sovereignty due to the Memoranda validated the public sense of victimisation by what was described as a ‘quasi-colonial EU’ (Featherstone, 2014: 9; Laliouti & Bithymitris, 2015). For instance, xenophobic and populist parties were voted mostly by the young, the unemployed, and those facing financial difficulties (Doxiadis & Matsaganis, 2012).

Critical theorists have argued that in light of the intensification of populism, there has been a corresponding rise of ‘anti-populism’, defined as ‘discourses aiming at the ideological policing and

the political marginalisation of emerging protest movements against the anti-democratic politics of austerity' (Katsambekis & Stavrakakis, 2015: 122). According to this argumentation, the backlash against populism exemplifies the suppression of people's right to dignified jobs and political recognition by means of delegitimisation of popular demands (Kutter, 2014; Stavrakakis, 2014). This debate is situated in the wider controversy on populism whereby some view populism as a corrective to malfunctioning democracies and others understand populism as a politically destructive force *as such* (Abts & Rummens, 2007; Kaltwasser, 2012).

To Memorandum or not to Memorandum?

Although the revival of cultural dualism reproduced representations of old and familiar binary oppositions, the particular circumstances of the crisis enriched these dualities with new dualist objectifications (Laliouti & Bithymitris, 2015). While initially some diagnosed a re-emergence of left-right cleavages (Boukala, 2014; Economides, 2012), the major fault line in Greece was said to crystallise around the question of the Memorandum and whether it should be supported or not (Dinas & Rori, 2013; Doxiadis & Matsaganis, 2012; Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou, 2013). For instance, political instability in Greece resulted in many elections and governments during the economic crisis and these electoral periods marked the times that most vividly illustrated the splits of Greek society. In both 2012 and 2015 election rounds, the pro-Memorandum and anti-Memorandum camps imprinted on the process and became its central object of contestation (Dinas & Rori, 2013; Doxiadis & Matsaganis, 2012; Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou, 2013). Due to increased polarisation and ideological intensity, these two theses became objectified within particular schematic associations and created – to a certain degree – stereotypical formations of meaning, although elements of both stances often intersect and are not mutually exclusive, which indicates the complexity of public opinion.

One of the stereotypical ways that the pro-Memorandum camp has been interpreted is as standing for more Europe, support for the Euro, cooperation with the Troika, tolerance towards austerity and compliance with reforms (Pappas, 2014; Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou, 2013). In contrast, the anti-Memorandum position has been associated with Euroscepticism, risking a potential Grexit, possible return to the Drachma currency, and resistance to reforms and austerity (Pappas, 2014; Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou, 2013). These associations acquired the seemingly unquestionable status of 'common sense' through representations of the Memorandum as the defining vehicle for staying in the Eurozone aligned with austerity measures (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou, 2013).

These links were facilitated by discourse stemming both from inside and outside Greece. For instance, EU partners repeatedly clarified that continuance of Greece within the Eurozone was conditional on the fiscal consolidation measures ingrained in the Memorandum without the option of renegotiation (Dinas & Rori, 2013; Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou, 2013). In line with this, domestic elites emphasised the 'need for a pro-European front and a functional pro-EU government' that would 'ensure that Greece would remain in the Eurozone' (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou, 2013: 8). Whether explicitly stated or not, continued membership entailed implementing the Memorandum conditions (Sandbu, 2015; Tsoukalis, 2013).

During the crisis years, the pro-Memorandum front was primarily represented by PASOK and ND, especially after the conversion of the latter when elected to govern, while the anti-Memorandum front was supported by SYRIZA, ANEL, GD, KKE, LAOS, and DIMAR until it joined the coalition government in 2012 (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou, 2013; Zartaloudis, 2013). Given the electoral marginalisation of PASOK and the limited appeal of the other parties, ND and SYRIZA became the party objects of the two ideological positions (Verney, 2014). The electoral campaigns were marked by additional binarisms. For example, ND leader, Antonis Samaras, during the 2012 election campaign, sketched out the following binaries framing the public debate in Greece: 'the euro or the drachma', 'change of economic policy or disaster with worse bailout conditions', 'jobs or

unemployment', 'security or fear', 'alliances abroad or isolation', 'government or anarchy', and 'past or future' (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou, 2013: 10).

Alternatively, and despite often criticising these as 'fake dilemmas' (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou, 2013: 9), SYRIZA discursively instilled its own binaries, such as those of 'homeland versus Merkel', 'independence versus Memoranda' and 'independence versus subjection' (Laliouti & Bithymitris, 2015: 262), but also 'hope versus fear', 'old elites versus the people', 'financial institutions versus the people', 'dignity versus austerity', 'renegotiation versus defeat', 'past versus future' (Katsambekis, 2015; Spourdalakis, 2013; Stavrakakis, 2015). As such, polarisation of ideas, or as Moscovici would term it, the 'battle of ideas' has been integral of the crisis experience in Greece, while old familiar representations of polarisation were re-enacted with increased intensity in the Greek political scene (Katsambekis, 2015; Pappas, 2014).

Referendum 2015: Greece's choice

The contested dynamics of the Memorandum were even more concretised in the referendum of July 2015 when the Greek citizens were invited to vote on whether Greece should accept a third Memorandum suggested by the EU or reject it (Askitas, 2015; Fabbrini, 2016). After the anti-austerity and anti-Memorandum government of SYRIZA/ANEL was formed after the elections of January 2015, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras pledged to renegotiate the conditions of the Memoranda signed by the previous governments (Fabbrini, 2016). During the politically intense week that followed the fall-out of the negotiations between the Greek government and the Troika, and the announcement of the referendum by Tsipras, where he openly urged people to vote for No, the referendum was represented by European and Greek politicians, experts and media as a vote on Eurozone and EU membership, rather than the proposed agreement (Askitas, 2015; Fabbrini, 2016; Giurlando, 2016).

This dissonance between messages generated from Brussels that a rejection of the Memorandum would automatically lead to Grexit and the Greek government's intention to vote on the character of the agreement, as well as all the diplomatic polemics that accompanied this wilful miscommunication (Giurlando, 2016), created the peculiar representation that the No vote appealed both to pro-EU and anti-EU Greeks for different reasons (Simms, 2015). As aptly put, 'observers must deal with the paradox that some of the most pro-European Greeks, along with many extreme leftist and rightist anti-Europeans, voted against the bailout deal' (Simms, 2015). As such, in many respects, the Euro crisis in Greece may have succeeded in creating the paradoxical political identities of 'Eurosceptic Europhiles' and 'Europhile Eurosceptics', exemplifying the profoundly *qualitative* and thinly-grained nature of the debate, rather than its 'either/or' nature, albeit alongside its intense polarisation.

According to the results, 61% of the voters voted against the Memorandum and 38% in favour of it, while Tsipras's popularity increased because his initiative was publicly interpreted as 'standing up to the EU leaders, especially against Germany' (Zestos, 2016: 258). More precisely, voters were said to 'believe that [...] Tsipras did the best he could to negotiate effectively with the creditors' (Pelagidis & Mitsopoulos, 2016: 760). The 2015 referendum can be argued to have been the sharpest peak of a long process of polarisation primarily in Greece, and to a lesser extent in the EU, regarding the management of the crisis and the severity of its consequences. Furthermore, it is fair to say that it constituted the most intense period of diplomatic conflict between Greece and its European partners, especially between Greece and Germany. However, it was more than a mere public disagreement on technical issues of crisis management. The 2015 referendum was evidently coloured with identity considerations and questions regarding Greece's future direction, inside or outside Europe. The Greek citizens who gathered around the *Syntagma Square* and the

Kallimarmaro Stadium to support the No and Yes vote respectively, spoke their minds on national TV and noticeably used identity terms not only about Greece and themselves, but also about Europe.¹³

Various Greek artists performed on the stage that was assembled at the No gathering, among them Alkinoos Ioannidis who stated, 'I've never performed as a support band for a prime minister before, but I will do it tonight... this is not a No to Europe, this is a No to *this* kind of Europe' (emphasis of the speaker). As shown, Ioannidis's statement expresses one of the fundamental reasons behind the No vote in Greece which centred on what was perceived as an unrealistic and dysfunctional, as well as oppressive and undemocratic, form of crisis management. Another artist on the same stage, Sokratis Malamas, commented, 'an experimentalist knows that if you do the same things, you will get the same results. We've said yes many times, it's time to say no', a comment that may evoke the metaphor of Greece as a guinea pig. A male citizen attending the No demonstration declared, 'this is the first time in five years that anyone has bothered to ask me what I think' indicating that there has been a public sense of suppression of political identities.

In contrast, in the Yes demonstration, Nikos Aliagas, Greek TV star in France, said that Greeks should vote for Yes, because: 'we will not be the ones to pay for the mistakes of other politicians and of other countries too, we must stay united', a statement which shows the segments of populist critique towards the EU within the Yes camp that does not entail rejection of the EU. Aliagas went on to pose the question of identity unambiguously: 'who are we? Are we Balkan? Are we Mediterranean? Are we Oriental? Are we Western? Who is the Greek today on the scale of Europe? We are Greek and European! [...] Europe is not only a Greek word, it is a way of thinking, it is a consciousness, it is identity'. A female farmer at the Yes gathering stated: 'I never wanted to be forced into such dilemmas, whether I am Greek or European, I never wanted to be called *Germanotsolias* because I want to vote for Yes... I want to remain in Europe'.

¹³ The quotations that are presented here were gathered as notes while watching the events on national television, i.e. ERT 1, Mega, Ant1.

Germanotsolias (Γερμανοτσολιάς) is a compound word, made of the Greek word for ‘German’, *Γερμανός*, and the word ‘tsolias’, *τσολιάς*, which refers to the 19th century skirt-wearing Royal Guard, established by the Bavarian King Otto, a special army unit which can only be seen today in the Presidential Guard, performing exclusively ritualistic tasks, rather than actual combat. The word made its appearance during the last years in Greece to describe supporters of the EU in a rather derogatory manner, while at the same time criticising the EU for becoming overwhelmed by German dominance. This point additionally exhibits a distinct anti-German sentiment that was evident during the crisis in Greece (Droumpouki, 2013; Tsoukalis, 2012), which is even more apparent in the older use of the word *Germanotsolias* which was attributed to the Greek Security Battalions, *Τάγματα Ασφαλείας* that collaborated with the Germans during the WWII (Zafeiropoulou *et al.*, 2015). Their members, called *tagmatasfalites* (ταγματασφαλίτες), were responsible for the death of many and are still bitterly remembered today as ‘traitors’, alongside the informers (called *δωσίλογοι*) of the time (Kalyvas, 2008; Mazower, 1993).

These negative representations of Germans and EU-friendly Greeks are also indicative of a profound conflict in the domain not only of Greece’s national identity, but also its European identity by exemplifying a sense of disunity with Europe and traits of symbolic hostility towards other Europeans (Mazower, 2015; Ntampoudi, 2014a). Furthermore, it characteristically illustrates SRT’s assumption that metaphors like these can create particular social objects that anchor current events to prior historical ones, which illustrates the strong cognitive relations between history and memory in the context of the Euro crisis (Jovchelovitch, 2012; Kalantzis, 2014). Finally, this point illustrates the existence of a very European ‘politics of blaming’ and identity conflict.

A very European identity conflict

The two crisis metanarratives have often been misunderstood as ‘mutually exclusive’ (Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013) and have led to recurring debates within the academic literature, public media

discussion and political elite rhetoric (i.e. Tekin, 2014). However, it is more accurate to assume that they only emphasise and illuminate different dimensions of the same phenomenon (Featherstone, 2011; Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013), since crises are 'products of multiple causal factors' (Hindmoor & McConnell, 2015: 25). Nevertheless, various researchers who work on the discourse of the Euro and the Greek crisis have empirically observed that these two metanarratives have been implicated into a 'blame game' (Chalaniova, 2014; Ntampoudi, 2014a; Tekin, 2014). Attribution of blaming only reflects the main public tendencies following crises (Hindmoor & McConnell, 2015). Within these particular dynamics there have been sharp distinctions between the European North and South or the economic core and periphery, with unfavourable representations of both regions/economic areas (Mylonas, 2012; Ntampoudi, 2014a; Tekin, 2014). It is important to clarify that this 'politics of blaming' has operated not only at the level of crisis causes, but also at the level of crisis management and response (Featherstone, 2011; Ntampoudi, 2014a). It would be useful here to compare Greece with a different case, i.e. Germany, in order to illustrate this point.

According to the politics of blaming, Greece and Germany have been schematically constructed as prototypical cases of the economic areas they were made to represent with the first being the most graphic representation of the economically challenged periphery and the latter the representative pioneer of the economic core (Ntampoudi, 2014a). As the two metanarratives indicate, both prototypes and economic areas have been blamed for the origins of the crisis on the basis of overspending or overproducing. Within the 'domestic' metanarrative Greece is understood as the primary culprit who undermined the economic success of the euro, while in the 'international' metanarrative Greece is portrayed as revelatory of wider problems, which shifts the blame off its shoulders (Kutter, 2014; Marconi, 2011; Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013). Similarly, from a 'domestic' metanarrative perspective, Germany is only responsible for its own national economy, but from an 'international' metanarrative perspective it is seen as a strong contributing factor to other countries' crises (Mylonas, 2015). Alternatively, from an international point of view, neither Greece, nor

Germany are the problem, but rather the fault line falls on the system of the Euro itself (Milios & Sotiropoulos, 2010).

At the level of crisis management, Greece has been blamed for delaying and resisting reforms and necessary measures requested by the EU institutions and the IMF (Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013). Simultaneously, Germany and France, the stronger economies of the EU, have been similarly blamed for not responding adequately and appropriately to the crisis by delaying and providing superficial or wrong solutions (Featherstone, 2011; Mitsikopoulou & Lykou, 2015). More widely, the EU and the IMF have been accused of exacerbating the political crisis in Greece, especially after the IMF admitted to underestimating the effects that austerity would have on Greek economy (Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013). The choice of austerity has often been juxtaposed with growth policies, presented as antithetical and more suitable for solving the crisis (Blyth, 2013). Depending on the metanarrative, Greece is viewed as more solely responsible and accountable for overcoming its crisis within a domestic metanarrative, and less so, within an international one that implies coordinated action by multiple actors and dependence on factors outside Greece's influence. Both Greece and Germany, South and North, have additionally been blamed for lacking the solidarity and commitment that would be necessary to keep European integration from disintegrating (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Ntampoudi, 2014a). Blaming as a strategy of representation is intrinsically linked to identity formation since representations of blame and wrong-doing are capable of constructing negative identity schemas and stereotypes and as an extension, negative public attitudes towards the ones who are constructed as the villains or wrong-doers.

In this respect, the aforementioned 'politics of blaming' based on different metanarratives of the Euro/Greek crisis can be said to have additionally created a destabilisation for Greek European identity by placing Greece in antagonism with other Europeans and as such, fellow members of its superordinate ingroup (Hornsey & Hogg, 2000; Huo *et al.*, 1996). In line with SIT, membership in ingroups provide social entities with their identity resources, therefore if a social entity is in a state

of conflict with its ingroup, it follows that it is in a state of conflict with itself, hence the experience of an identity destabilisation in the sense of identity conflict (Hornsey & Hogg, 2000; Huo *et al.*, 1996). Furthermore, representations of conflicting interests among different European countries and the context of Greek contestation of the directives coming from the EU reconstruct the understanding of European integration as antagonistic to national wellbeing, thus to national identity, creating an antagonistic relationship between the two identity dimensions (Fabbrini, 2013; Theodossopoulos, 2014). Finally, Greece's conflictual representation with its European dimension was further complicated by the circulation of negative national stereotypes and particularised European prototypes that have led to representations of identity destabilisation in the form of identity devaluations and deficits, but also reactionary claims of identity overvaluations. These dynamics will be discussed in the next sections.

Identity devaluation: national stereotypes and European prototypes

Objectification through metaphor: Greece's 'villain' roles

During the Euro crisis, there were several metaphorical representations, within which Greece played various roles, mostly negatively valued ones. According to SRT, objectification of vague and confusing phenomena, like crises, crystallises through various cognitive mechanisms, one of which is metaphor-making (Arruda, 2015). In metaphor-making, the abstract discursive object acquires a meaningful concreteness that facilitates the sense of successful explanation and increased understanding (Arruda, 2015; Christidou *et al.*, 2004). Metaphor-making is an 'objectification device or tool' that employs human cognition for the construction of comparable images and narratives (Christidou *et al.*, 2004; Wagner *et al.*, 1995). This process is achieved by drawing elements from the *source domain* which is the widely familiar mental schema, i.e. a storyline or an image, and ascribing them onto the *target domain*, which is the object that needs apprehension (Wagner *et al.*, 1995). Nevertheless, metaphors have ontological limitations and thus cannot reproduce the totality of the

object itself. As put (Arruda, 2015: 131), 'to produce a metaphor is an exercise of imagination which... highlights certain parts of the object and recombines them into an effective analogy'. In this sense, metaphors are not 'accurate' or 'true' but rather analogical and figurative (Byford, 2002; Christidou *et al.*, 2004). The use of metaphors has been one of the primary ways of representing the Euro crisis to the wider public (Arrese & Vara-Miguel, 2015; Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Joris *et al.*, 2015; Schäffner, 2012; Stavrakakis, 2013). Some of these metaphorical scripts concern the ontology of the Euro crisis and include metaphors of war, game, disease, natural disaster and zoomorphism. Others relate to the crisis management and represent it through scripts of rescuing, begging, teaching, and standing at the cross-roads.

The *war* metaphor, one of the most commonly used inside and outside Europe (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Joris *et al.*, 2015; Kutter, 2014) represents the relations of European nations as being at war with each other (Joris *et al.*, 2015). While some of them concern disagreements between Germany and France regarding crisis management issues, others focus on the threat that Greece poses to other European countries and/or European integration as a whole (Bohn & de Jong, 2011; Kutter, 2014; Touri & Rogers, 2013). Particularly with regards to the last point, researchers have argued that during the first years of the crisis Greece was persistently portrayed as 'an enemy within Europe's own ranks' (Askanus & Mylonas, 2015: 63). Tekin (2014), for example, analyses the way that Greek elections in 2012 were represented by European political leaders as 'blackmailing the EU', a representation that enacts an image of Greece as an 'economic terrorist' and an adversary, rather than a participant in the EU.

War metaphors operate within the 'politics of blaming' aforementioned in the previous section and imply that EU countries have opposing interests and interaction between them is belligerent and strategic, rather than that of solidly united community with common goals (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Joris *et al.*, 2015). Cross-country studies (Joris *et al.*, 2015; see also, Bickes *et al.*, 2014a) have shown that the war metaphor additionally articulates through the metaphorical frame of *game*, which 'implies a

rather friendly struggle between players' (Joris *et al.*, 2014: 609). Nevertheless, we can appreciate that even games between friendly players still imply an antagonistic relationship, albeit not a 'bloody' one (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a). Within the game metaphor Greece is understood as the player that is either incapable, or simply unwilling, to play by the rules (Kutter, 2014; Tekin, 2014).

The *disease* metaphor concerns the crisis being depicted as an epidemic or a virus, while the *natural disaster* metaphor employs words such as financial tsunami, hurricane, perfect storm, earthquake, fire, vortex or quagmire (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Joris *et al.*, 2015; Kutter, 2014). Both metaphors can be seen as naturalistic analogies, implying that the crisis is naturally caused and as such, not dependent on any given specific factor, such as financial or political institutions and actors (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a). In this sense, these metaphors could be said to have the capacity to escape blaming propensity, as is the case with the disaster metaphor, whereby Greece 'is no longer blamed for having triggered the crisis' (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a: 435). This can be explained by the rather eschatological and fatalistic meanings that disaster metaphors entail (Mylonas, 2012). Alternatively, the depictions of the Euro crisis as an outcome of a 'superior power' like fate (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a: 441) can be seen as metaphysical metaphors, rather than natural and physical, representing the crisis as a 'supernatural phenomenon' (Murray-Leach *et al.*, 2014: 1).

Within this discursive context of fatalism, it could be argued that the most frequent and resonant representation of the Greek crisis is that of 'Greek tragedy', a term often used in academic and media discourse (i.e. Douzinas, 2010; also Tzogopoulos, 2013 on media). The term refers to the ancient Greek theatrical genre of tragedy within which the hero usually meets a disastrous ending due to the twists of fate or whimsies of the Gods that ultimately govern all human relations, some integral narrative elements of all tragedy, meant to punctuate the irony of personal agency that always meets the bitter end (Holland, 2000). Similarly, within this dramaturgical analogy, Greece's struggle to overcome the crisis is implied to be futile and quite literally, destined to fail.

However, within the disease metaphor, Greece has not been spared culpability since it has been represented as the 'patient zero' of the crisis and the original source from which crisis could spread not only to other EU countries, but also the world as a whole (Tracy, 2012; Wodak & Angouri, 2014). This pattern has been explicated most consistently by the term 'contagion' or 'metastasis' used in both media and expert discourse (Kutter, 2014; Tzogopoulos, 2013). This situates Greece as the cause of the problem, rather than the symptom and finds resonance with the domestic metanarrative that nationalises blaming (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a). Nevertheless, the portrayal of Greece as the 'sick man of Europe' (Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013: 2) predates the crisis and as such, it becomes plausible for commentators to state that the crisis signals the 'return of the Greek patient' (Pagoulatos & Triantopoulos, 2009: 35).

Another crisis metaphor concerns zoomorphic analogies in both expert and media discourse. Media representations witnessed the sensationalist use of the acronym PIIGS, constructed by the initials of the countries that faced financial problems, such as Portugal, Ireland and/or Italy, Greece and Spain, and noticeably denoting the figure of the pig animal. Examples of titles include 'Eurozone 'pigs' are leading us all to slaughter' (Jeremy Warner for *The Telegraph*, 2010) or 'While Greece flails, are the rest of the stricken Pigs taking off?' (Alistair Dawber for *The Independent*, 2015). These two examples show that although the term was more extensively used during the first years of the economic crisis before it was banned by some institutions, in 2015 its usage could still be traced in public discourse. Academic discourse itself made use of terms such as 'PIGS' and 'non-PIGS' to speak of countries with or without financial difficulties, respectively (i.e. Fernandes & Mota, 2011; Lewis-Beck & Nadeau, 2012).

Alternatively, several researchers criticised the use of this acronym for its derogatory and dehumanizing connotations and the misleading grouping of these countries that obliterated their differences (Capucha *et al.*, 2014; Nicholls, 2015). Others argued that this negative acronym adversely impacted the markets' response to these countries (Brazys & Hardiman, 2014), while some

argued that such acronyms, consistent with the domestic metanarrative, were used to justify austerity policies (Capucha *et al.*, 2014). Notably, the term PIGS is often used by authors who wish to speak in support of these countries (i.e. Gärtner *et al.*, 2011), although even this favourable motivation can be said to reproduce the use of a negatively loaded term (Ntampoudi, 2013). Alternatively, another derogatory acronym was coined for the signification of the same national economies in the form of GIPSIs, resembling the word 'gypsies' which stands for the social group of the Roma people who are often subject to social discrimination, as shown in previous studies (Perez *et al.*, 2007).

Nevertheless, the PIIGS acronym was not the only schema of animalisation as indicated by recent research which found several animal images in political cartoons of the Euro/Greek crisis (see Bain *et al.*, 2012; Elsayed, 2015; Talalay, 2013; Wilk, 2015). In terms of Greece's case, Chalaniova's (2014) examination, for example, indicated that compared to Europe/EU which was never pictured in animalistic ways, the Greeks were often depicted in animal form, such as pigs, donkeys, or bulls. Chalaniova (2014: 40) comments that although images of both Greece and Europe were comparable due to both incorporating symbols, such as flags, and personifications of mythical and actual figures, like ancient Athenians or current politicians, the issue of zoomorphism was the only point of 'differentiation through dehumanisation'.

On another occasion, a researcher observes that the crisis was discursively labelled as the 'Greek pest' metaphorically referring to the source domain of insects or animals that destroy crops and representing Greece as 'the primary trigger of calamities' (Kutter, 2014: 456), which resonates with the domestic metanarrative that locates culpability within the national context. Alternatively, from an international metanarrative that shifts the weight to global accountabilities, Greece once again figures as another animal, namely, the 'guinea pig' (Marconi, 2011; Mylonas, 2012). Within this representation, Greece is understood as the object of a 'laboratory' experiment, designed to test the degree of neoliberal and post-democratic policies nations can uphold for the purposes of installing

these to 'the whole of Europe' (Mylonas, 2012: 647) or simply test 'for the survival of the Eurozone' (Marconi, 2011: 30).

The remaining metaphors concern the response and management of the crisis and refer to widely known scripts of social practices, such as begging, rescuing, teaching and learning, and standing at the crossroads. Beginning with the first, Greece's search for funds that would prevent its default has often been the topic of news media. These representations are directly denoted by expressions such as Greece 'seeks', 'asks', or 'requests' loans or meetings with EU leaders, which indirectly connote the image of a country as a beggar, while on other occasions, the beggar identity is explicitly stated, as is the case with titles such as 'A poor nation, with a talent for begging' (Marcello Simonetta for Politico, 2015) and 'Chinese investors wary of filling Greece's golden begging bowl' (Tom Mitchell & Kerin Hope for the *Financial Times*, 2015). Begging scripts necessarily entail the dual relationship between beggar and philanthropist.

A comparable representation that approximates this script is the representation of the Euro crisis management as a rescuing endeavour attempted by the EU and the IMF for the purposes of assisting insolvent economies, including Greece (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a). Within this representation stronger economies are depicted as 'heroic, good-natured, selfless and generous' while the recipient countries are portrayed as 'needy, poor and helpless' (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a: 433-434). Consistent with the international metanarrative, some academics have criticised this crisis representation as being hypocritical because they viewed the undertaking as a rescue of the banks, rather than of the countries in financial trouble, while they additionally argued that this script served to conceal the lack of solidarity within the EU and the culpability of creditor countries (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a: Mylonas, 2012).

Another argument projected against the rescuing script is what is viewed as harsh conditionality that is imposed on recipient countries according to which help is provided granted that structural reforms are made and austerity is followed (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a). The issue of conditionality and reform has

additionally been implicated in the next representation of crisis management, namely the script of teaching and learning. Within this, creditor countries are represented as teachers who function as role models for the heavily indebted countries and dictate actions (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Sommer, 2014). Correspondingly, indebted countries are presented as pupils who need to learn from their teachers and do their homework (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Sommer, 2014). While this representation has been attached to all the countries that faced financial turmoil and requested bailout funding, not all were pictured as good and obedient pupils, since Greece was differentiated and widely understood as the 'bad pupil' compared to the 'good pupils' of Ireland and Portugal (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Magone, 2014). In tune with this representation, Greece's resistance or inability to complete reforms was also described as childish and immature, projecting the image of a stubborn and disrespectful pupil, an impression that was particularly emphasised after SYRIZA's rise to power by personifying representations of childishness on the person of Alexis Tsipras (see i.e. Larry Elliott for *The Guardian*, 2015 and Chris Giles for the *Financial Times*, 2015).

Finally, there has been a widespread metaphor of the EU as 'standing at the crossroads' and having to choose between following an intergovernmental moderate integration pattern or moving forwards with further and deeper integration which follows a federalist model (Kutter, 2014). This point has been a controversial debate of the Euro crisis with multiple parameters that include conflicting national interests and sovereignty concerns, as well as the construction of political consensus and public support (Fabbrini, 2013). Although it is not in the scope of this thesis to conclude on what form European integration should take, suffice to say that one of the main assumptions of this metaphor of crossroads is that the EU has progressed as an uncertain hybrid between intergovernmentalism and federalism and this model has met its limits due to the intensified conditions of the Euro crisis, hence the urgency of making a decision at this particular historical interval (Ntampoudi, 2015; Schout & Wolff, 2012). In terms of Greece specifically, its role within this scenario has been that of the 'critical juncture' which features Greece as the acutely and often presented as uniquely problematic case that forced the EU to decide on its future

development (Kutter, 2014). And in this respect, it may be recognised as an irony in future historiography that it was Greece's ambiguous, marginal and maladjusted case that propelled European integration forwards (Menz & Smith, 2013; Yiangou *et al.*, 2013).

Culturalisation: negative national stereotypes

Representations of Greece during the economic crisis appear to have crystallised around negative national stereotypes that have operated within the three emblematic domains of European integration, namely, the economic, the political and the cultural, which in turn invited questions of European identity (Bickes *et al.*, 2014b; Chalaniova, 2014; Mylonas, 2015; Tekin, 2014). As explained, the three pillars of European integration constitute distinct, but not separate, domains as they constantly interact with each other (Bideleux, 1996a; Hahn, 2009). In this sense, the economic complications of Greece were additionally represented as culturally and politically problematic. In all three domains, an overarching pattern has been the vivid *normativity* of the narratives which indicates that questions of values and ethics have played a central role in the crisis discourse (Lampropoulou, 2014; Schmidt, 2013). Values and identities are strongly associated because the values that social entities stand for or against, as well as the content they ascribe to them, ultimately form their identities (Hitlin, 2012; on the EU see the concept of 'Normative Power Europe' as an identity-builder, Hahn, 2009).

Beginning with the relations between the economy and culture, empirical research has demonstrated that there has been a distinct process of *culturalisation* of the Euro/Greek crisis that explicitly argues or implies that economic problems are the product of specific cultural traits (Mylonas, 2012; Ntampoudi, 2014a; Tekin, 2014). These traits relate to the public discussion of the crisis origins and operate within the domestic crisis metanarrative that blames domestic factors. These devaluing patterns have progressed in two different ways: a) one that groups Greece with other economically challenged economies (i.e. the so-called PIGS), and b) another that singles

Greece out as an exceptionally problematic case (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Mylonas, 2012). More specifically, these traits are objectified around three main representations, namely laziness, profligacy and corruption (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Marconi, 2011; Mylonas, 2015).

Although in public discourse it often becomes difficult to linguistically establish the grammatical object of these narratives because more often than not discursive actors refer to the object of 'Greece' in abstraction, we can assume that they refer to either 'the government', 'the citizens' or simply, the totality of Greek society (Wodak & Angouri, 2014). It should be noted that culturalist interpretations facilitated by abstraction necessarily engage in errors of *essentialisation* of the cultures they describe because they construct the impression of uniformity and homogeneity, assuming that all governmental actors or all citizens are the same (Herzfeld, 2016a; Mylonas, 2012; Ntampoudi, 2014a), which is ontologically unsustainable given the pluralism of social reality (Arendt, 1998).

Regarding stereotyping processes, the links between economic failure and cultural character are not always made fully explicit, which creates the need for them to be analytically reconstructed in order to wholly explicate the implications of negative stereotyping (Wagner *et al.*, 2009). For example, when Greeks are accused of laziness, the word 'lazy' is not necessarily used. Instead authors may say that Greeks retire too early. For example, Anders Borg, Swedish Finance Minister, stated that 'Obviously, Swedes and other taxpayers should not have to pay for Greeks who choose to retire in their 40s' (in Coleman for *BBC*, 2015). Alternatively, actors may say that Greeks love to party and have too many holidays, as suggested in a *Bild* title, stating that 'We pay the bills while others party shamelessly' (Koch for *Bild*, 2010 as cited in Sommer, 2014). Politicians' statements appear to imply similar notions. For instance, Angela Merkel commented that 'We can't have a common currency where some get lots of vacation time and others very little' (in Pop for euobserver, 2011).

Similarly, the word 'profligacy' may not necessarily show up. Instead, authors may say that Greeks have oversized salaries, pensions or benefits. Another *Bild* title wonders, 'Why do we have to pay

the Greek's luxurious pensions?' (as cited in Bickes *et al.*, 2014b: 115). As put (Shore, 2012: 8), representations of Greece during the crisis have focused on 'Greek cleaners who earn as much as ministers and the whole country working half a week'. In terms of government corruption, various scandals, clientelism and repeated incidents of falsified statistics, including for the purposes of joining the Eurozone, are often invoked as examples (Antoniades, 2012; Kutter, 2014; Mylonas, 2015), while in terms of citizen corruption the issue of tax-evasion is a frequent reference. Similarly to representations of laziness, political figures appear to support such ideas, as in the case of Christine Lagarde's comment, 'as far as Athens is concerned, I also think about all those people who are trying to escape tax all the time' (in Elliott & Aitkenhead for *The Guardian*, 2012). As such, although negative stereotyping was not explicit during the economic crisis, there were several representations that were indirectly devaluating.

Exceptionalisation: 'Greece is a special case' and nobody is Greece

Comparative empirical studies of different national media's coverage of the crisis have shown that Greece's case was more salient and more negatively represented than other cases, such as those of Spain, Italy Ireland and Portugal (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Tzogopoulos, 2013). Moreover, academic representations often begin by mentioning that Greece has been standing out in the context of the crisis, as is demonstrated by expressions such as 'stood in the spotlight' (Chalaniova, 2014: 19), being 'at the epicentre of attention' (Tzogopoulos, 2013: chp.1) or 'the 'Greek case'... probably the most visible sovereign debt crisis in Europe and beyond' (Wodak & Angouri, 2014: 417). In this sense, Greece went through a process of *exceptionalisation*, which was intensified by the argument of various EU leaders, such as Merkel, Sarkozy and Schauble, that 'Greece is a special case' (Mylonas, 2012) ¹⁴. Kutter (2014: 455), for example, explains that Greece in the German media 'stands out by amount, extent and gravity', while Tekin (2014: 23) summarises that 'out of these so-called PIGS,

¹⁴ See also, Angela Merkel in *Reuters*, 2015; Milne, 2012 for the *Financial Times*; Wolfgang Schäuble in *Reuters*, 2012.

only the case of the Greek rescue programme became so problematic, with strong popular and elite reactions at EU level’.

In addition, we can appreciate that the mere creation of media terms such as ‘Grexit’, ‘Graccident’, ‘Grecovery’ and ‘Agreekment’ (Rose, 2015; Wodak & Angouri, 2014) indicates that coverage of Greece has been more particularised and expansively creative than in other cases which did not generate their own compound linguistic objects in the public sphere. Comparing to past representations, the ‘Greek problem’ (Tzogopoulos, 2013) within the EU resurfaces as a validated prophecy and is accompanied by pre-existing notions of Greece’s exceptionalism compared to its Southern-European and Irish counterparts. Paradoxically, Greece appears to have more in common with Germany (Herzfeld, 2016a) when it comes to symbolic degradation, than with any of the so-called PIGS countries, mainly for two reasons: a) because both Greece and Germany occupied protagonistic and exceptionalised roles within the economic crisis, albeit for very different reasons, and b) because they were both extensively criticised and as such, subjected to harsher identity devaluation compared to other member-states.¹⁵

Another way that Greece has undergone exceptionalising representations was by being depicted and treated as increasingly isolated during the crisis. Although at the beginning of the Euro crisis, the parallel formation of ‘anti-austerity and pro-democracy’ social movements, such as the *Indignados* in Spain and the *Aganaktismenoi* in Greece, as well as comparable demonstrations in Portugal and Italy, created a base for ‘transnational activism’ and ‘cosmopolitan identities’ (della Porta & Andretta, 2013; della Porta & Mattoni, 2014), as well as representations of ‘Southern-European crisis-related contention’ and ‘transnational solidarity’ (Kousis, 2014: 142), as public mobilisation decreased over time and these movements faded, such sources of shared European identifications became less prominent. Furthermore, as other ‘programme countries’ started showing signs of

¹⁵ For an extensive comparison of the national European identities of the two countries during the crisis, see Ntampoudi (2013), as well as the collaborative research project on blame attribution GGCRISI – The Greeks, the Germans and the Crisis, led by Prof. Maria Kousis and Prof. Jochen Roose (<http://www.ggcrisi.info/>).

recovery, stabilisation and increased compliance with EU directives, Greece found itself increasingly isolated in its anti-austerity resistance.

Over time, the representation of Greece as a 'special case' was complemented by the 'We are not like Greece' argument projected by various Southern-European political actors (for Spain see Antoniadou, 2012; for Portugal see Magone, 2014), in their attempts to avoid symbolic contamination by distancing themselves from Greece. These tendencies were additionally facilitated by explicit comparisons between respective Southern member-states by EU leaders within the pre-existing evaluative 'good/bad pupil' metaphor, as in the case of Wolfgang Schäuble, who stated that 'The Greeks are a special case...The Portuguese government is doing a decent job' (in Reuters, 2012).

Notably, these trends were presented as more prominent after SYRIZA's electoral victory, whose policies were registered with bringing Greece to a state of international isolation¹⁶, especially since the No vote in the 2015 referendum was presented, both inside and outside Greece, as threatening to isolate the country from its European partners (i.e. Spiegel & Wagstyl, 2015; *To Vima*, 2015b). In terms of SYRIZA's initial goal for political alliance across the European South and the misguided quest of Southern-European solidarity that could change what was presented as an austere and undemocratic Europe, suffice to say that even Pablo Iglesias, leader of the Spanish *Podemos*, has suggestively stated that 'Spain is not Greece' (see Ashifa Kassam for *The Guardian*, 2015). As such, we can evaluate that a strong tendency of distancing occurred with various political actors across Europe wishing to distance themselves from Greece.

While these distancing tactics can be understood as reassuring both markets and national citizenries by means of isolating, thus containing, the 'Greek problem', the combined mix of Greece's isolation, devaluation and exceptionalisation contributed to its objectification as an example of failure that needed to be avoided 'at all cost' (Antoniades, 2012; Pentaraki, 2013). For instance, in the run up to the Polish 2010 presidential elections, then prime-minister Donald Tusk stated: 'We

¹⁶ See, for example, Mehreen Khan for the *Telegraph*, 2015; Cas Mudde for the *Huffington Post*, 2015b; also, *To Vima*, 2015a.

would have now become the Greece of Central Europe, if we had followed the advices of Jarosław Kaczyński' (as cited in Antoniadis, 2012). However, these tendencies were not only confined within Europe. Outside Europe, examples include Naoto Kan, the Japanese Prime Minister referencing Greece's fiscal crisis and asking his fellow politicians to commit to raising the consumption tax, concluding that 'Japan must take action before it becomes like Greece' (as cited in Antoniadis, 2012). Social entities that are used as 'examples' of 'cautionary tales' are commonly stripped, thus emptied, of any constituent identity elements, other than those that successfully serve the didactic function of the warning storyline, which in line with the moral message of the tale, aims at reinforcing conformity and discipline¹⁷. As such, moralising representations were also observable.

Moralisation: the prototypical 'good European'

However, these interrelated processes of culturalisation, essentialisation, exceptionalisation and stereotyping are not the most interesting aspects of the Euro/Greek crisis discourse, since these simplifying processes are integral and spontaneous facilitating aspects of human cognition (Hogg & Vaughan, 2014). In this respect, what is interesting is the ways these are implicated in normative debates and 'values wars' or in other words, the voluntary dimension of social evaluation and less behaviourist practice of judgement (Moscovici, 1998b). In this respect, the above cultural traits are additionally presented as signs of low moral character, which indicates the profound *moralisation* and normativity of the Euro crisis discourse (Antoniadis, 2012; Kutter, 2014; Mylonas, 2012; Tracy, 2012).

At a first analytical level, it appears comprehensible enough how practices such as bribery, clientelism, nepotism, tax-evasion and misappropriation of funds can be understood as immoral, since they are widely associated with corruption, which is conventionally understood as 'a bad thing that causes major harm to individuals and societies' and 'needs to be reduced' (Heywood, 2014: 1).

¹⁷ See also 'grasshopper and ant' metaphor of the Euro crisis, Kitromilides, 2013; Tsoukala, 2013.

On the other hand, laziness and profligacy have been argued to be viewed as lacking in ethical content within 'a liberal political ethos, which prioritises values such as merit, effort and work ethic, instead of traditional social and political practices' that are considered a burden to modernisation (Andreotti *et al.*, 2015).

The normativity of the crisis discourse is most clearly demonstrated by the usage of terms that carry distinctly moral connotations, such as those of 'moral hazard', 'deficit sinners' and 'Euro-deceivers' (Bickes *et al.*, 2014b; Kutter, 2014; Tekin, 2014). 'Moral hazard' is defined as 'the possibility of encouraging risky behaviours by parties who view their contracts as protecting them from loss and risk' (Hay, 2010: 384). It follows from this, that governments that know that another level of government will bail them out, run larger deficits and create larger debts than states in systems where governments have no bailout guarantees (Guiso *et al.*, 2013; Hallerberg, 2011). Within this representation, Greece was a country that posed a 'moral hazard' threat, because of its 'free-riding' behaviour and unreliability, which could lead to other countries' dissent or equally immoral behaviour, if Greece was to be seen as receiving preferential treatment and unjustifiable bailout assistance (Antoniades, 2012; Guiso *et al.*, 2013). As such, the question of strict conditionality before granting financial help became a dominant object of the crisis discourse, because of the need to convey the message that solidarity was by no means unconditional, but instead directly attached to increased EU supervision (Guiso *et al.*, 2013). Within the binary opposition of 'saints' and 'sinners' exists the religious assumption that sinners can become saints by means of redemption (Mylonas, 2012), or vice versa, saints may sin, possibly due to temptation imposed by surrounding sinners (Dyson, 2014; see also, religious analyses of the Euro crisis, Guiso *et al.*, 2013).

Within this religiously inspired metaphor-making, and to the degree that this prevails and reins as a dominant representation, the logical extreme or solution becomes the punishment of the member-states that are seen as destabilising the economy (Mylonas, 2012), whether imposed by actual sanctions, such as legal exclusion, indirect pressure, such as the stop of financial assistance

(Sommer, 2014), or even symbolic tactics, such as public shaming (Petley, 2013). Necessarily, within an international context, such measures entail the degradation of a state's national identity and international standing because states that are considered 'norm violating are denounced as pariah states which do not belong to the community of civilised nations' (Friman, 2015: 145).

In terms of sanctions, for example, Greece has often been represented as being threatened by EU institutions with exclusion from the Eurozone, especially after SYRIZA/ANEL's election and during the 2015 referendum¹⁸, or from the Schengen Zone, during the ongoing refugee crisis (see i.e. Herzfeld, 2016b; Hope for the *Financial Times*, 2016). Furthermore, within such a political climate, sanctioning became reasonable for some politicians, such as Finland's former foreign minister, Alex Stubb, who said that Darwinism should apply in the Eurozone with the 'fittest' six (out of seventeen) triple-A rated Eurozone economies having the strongest say in the management of the crisis (in Baker for *Reuters*, 2011). Symbolically, others have focused on shaming tactics, like Germany's EU Commissioner, Günther Oettinger, who suggested that 'deficit sinners' should fly their EU flags at half-mast 'in shame' (Spiegel, 2011a). Oettinger added that EU officials should replace Greek officials so that they can 'operate without concern for resistance [to] end [Greek] inefficiency' because 'those who demand solidarity from the other countries must also be prepared to give up partial responsibility for a certain time' (Spiegel, 2011a).

At a deeper analytical level, what the moralising discourse based on the social objects of guilt and shame (Mylonas, 2012) relates to is the associated issues of entitlement and deservingness, as these are further associated and enriched with ideas of responsibility, trustworthiness, reliability and credibility (Antoniades, 2012; Galpin, 2014; Lampropoulou, 2014; Tekin, 2014; Tseronis, 2015). In this respect, Greece was portrayed as a culture that nurtures and validates feelings of entitlement (Konstandaras, 2012), while the implied message has been that Greek citizens are unworthy of such entitlements, because they have not worked hard enough to earn them, which creates a

¹⁸ See, for example, Evans-Pritchard's article 'US defends unruly Greece as Europe steps up Grexit threats' for the *Telegraph*, 2015.

representation of dissonance between Greek entitled claims and their undeserving status (see also, deservingness theory, Feather, 2014). Greece's lack of deservingness during the crisis was additionally represented by arguments that Greece should have never been admitted in the Eurozone (Antoniades, 2012) and limited and lukewarm expressions of solidarity and support by EU leaders, compared to the more pronounced and intense expositions of distrust, warnings, urges, unwillingness to negotiate and constructions of differences, rather than similarities (Bickes *et al.*, 2014b; Lampropoulou, 2014).

In many respects, economic bankruptcy was represented as indicative of moral bankruptcy and a crisis of cultural values. As an extension, within this logic, it appeared easier to represent a 'decadent culture' as unworthy of its inherited possessions, even if these hold no relevance to prior economic management, but instead hold symbolic significance as signifiers of national identity (Talalay, 2013). For example, ideas such as those urging Greece to sell its islands and the Acropolis for the purpose of 'debt redemption' were voiced by German politicians, such as Josef Schlarmann, senior member of Merkel's Christian Democrats, and Frank Schaeffler, finance policy expert in the Free Democrats (Inman & Smith for *The Guardian*, 2010). Furthermore, researchers of political cartoons of the Euro/Greek crisis have argued that they depict Greece as having 'disgraced its patrimony' (Talalay, 2013: 249). Most importantly, this 'cultural decadence' was represented as incurable and utterly hopeless, facilitated by representations of Greece as having a 'bottomless pit', an expression used by Wolfgang Schauble himself (see i.e. *Ekathimerini*, 2012), and media representations of Greeks as 'incorrigible' (Tracy, 2012). For example, TIME magazine's following comment illustrates the alleged Greek remorselessness: 'Following years of free spending, Greeks find themselves in deep debt. That hasn't stopped the party. Keeping the good times alive in Greece's bouzouki clubs' (as cited in Tracy, 2012).

Finally, this moralising discourse became more evident and vivid when presented through binary oppositions such as those of 'good' and 'bad' which were juxtaposed to each other (Lampropoulou,

2014; Sommer, 2014). Within this framework, contrasting representations intensify the cultural differences between the ‘hard-working North’ and the ‘lazy South’ or the ‘thrifty, honest Germany’ and the ‘profligate, dishonest Greece’ (Marconi, 2011; Tekin, 2014). Some have argued that there has been a shift from an image of the EU as a post-national and political entity to an overtly economic and technocratic one (Stavrakakis, 2014; Tekin, 2014). However, to be sure, the view of the EU as an apolitical ‘technocratic, managerial, top-down’ project (Shore 1998: 48) precedes the Euro crisis, especially in accounts of critical traditions, like post-democratic, post-colonial and Marxist theory (i.e. Douzinas, 2013; Mouffe *et al.*, 2012; Žižek, 2014), or critically inclined disciplines, like anthropology (i.e. Knight, 2013; Herzfeld, 2016a; Shore, 1998). Within such traditions, and from an international and systemic metanarrative of the crisis, very often embracing anti-neoliberal criticism and structural analysis, some have additionally argued that this process of *depoliticisation* of the EU has encouraged the formation of prototyping processes that create the image of the ‘good European’ as anchored around economic values, rather than political (Mylonas, 2012; Selmic, 2013; Tekin, 2014).¹⁹

In this sense, representations of the economic crisis can be said to have intensified the meaning of ‘good European citizenship’ as cognitively equated with that of the ‘good economic human subject’, or in other words, the ‘Homo Oeconomicus’, which is defined as follows:

‘The *homo oeconomicus* is a point of intersection between political and economic citizenship, but [one] that is transacted across multiple techniques and technologies of government... As a subject whose interests intensify, the *homo oeconomicus* requires continual training and retraining to remain rational, effectively calculating, and well-disciplined. The *homo oeconomicus* is thus the potential but never sufficiently polished material for “good citizenship,” as the principle element for “moral” economy/government. To recognise moral hazards, she or he must remain a prudential and accountable subject as interests and investments intensify’ (Hay, 2010: 391)

¹⁹ Although these two spheres have been seen in the past as containing two distinctly different philosophical ontologies (see Arendt’s distinction between the ‘social’ and the ‘political’, 1998), there is always the need to question what kind of philosophies of politics or of economics are involved in the debate and how they are represented as contradictory, since there are multiple political and economic philosophies.

As demonstrated, within the context of European integration and the Euro crisis, member-states have been presented as subjects of training and tutelage in teaching metaphors, along the formation of new conditionalities that could grant or withhold the title of 'good pupil' (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Magone, 2014). Given that Greece was understood as a confirmed and continuous 'bad pupil' before and after the crisis and to the degree that European identity and justified citizenship is understood as economic discipline and achievement, Greece was equally constructed as a 'bad European' due to its failure to successfully perform European economic morality (Kutter, 2014; Wodak & Angouri, 2014).

Within this stream of analytical representations, some have argued that these dynamics represent distinctly Western-centric understandings of the economic subjects as modern, rational and instrumental, which has led to accusations of the Euro crisis discourse as one that has orientalised Greece by presenting it as irrational, backwards and at odds to the western/European ethos (Antoniades, 2012; Mylonas, 2012; Selmic, 2013; Tekin, 2014). This placement of Greek problems in its Oriental 'nature' was evident for example in Euro Group President Jean-Claude Juncker's statement, maintaining that 'It's the truth: Their [the Greeks'] fiscal management is not working. There is no staff, no real trade history, which is the heritage of the Ottoman invasion' and adding that Spain and Portugal had better chances of recovering than Greece (in *Hurriyet Daily News*, 2012). Comparing to past representations of Greece, we can note that this is a continuity of previous historical and ideological narratives of modernisation/Europeanisation and the 'problem of hybridity' between East and West (Triantafyllidou *et al.*, 2013).

As a result of the above, Greece was constructed during the crisis as member of the EU group, but a less than prototypical one, that is, as part of the ingroup but not fully acknowledged or accepted (Ntampoudi, 2014a; Tekin, 2014). Entities that are found between the intersection of belongingness and otherness acquire the borderline status of the 'internal other', as explained by SIT (Ntampoudi, 2014a; Tekin, 2014). In line with SIT, social entities that are prescribed such status can experience

identity devaluation and identity threat (Pagliaro *et al.*, 2012), which constitutes a form of identity destabilisation. However, these circumstances can provoke reactionary and strategic responses that aim to recontextualise and redefine the meanings of negative stereotypes into positive ones (Huddy, 2001), which necessarily create identity overvaluations and different forms of identity destabilisations. Within the Euro crisis and the critique of economic rationality, representations of Germany and the EU waging an economic ‘war’ against Greece and other ‘programme countries’ have objectified around notions of the war between economy and politics upon the fertile ground of cultural differences (Tekin, 2014). Such representations relate to differentiated responses towards the case of Greece, anchored around support and solidarity. These complex dynamics are the focus of the next section.

Identity overvaluation: solidarity and great expectations

Although Greece underwent significant identity devaluation during the Euro crisis, it would be misleading to argue that all reactions towards Greece were negative. Several actors expressed positive feelings towards the crisis-ridden country and constructed it in favourable representations. As was explained in the previous chapter, Greece’s historical identity trajectory progressed from an overvalued identity as the ‘origin of Western civilisation and European identity’ to a devalued one as the ‘failure of modernity and European integration’ (Triantafyllidou *et al.*, 2013). Within the crisis, however, there was an opposite movement, with Greece passing from the initial period of ‘Greek bashing’ to a period of positively inclined representations (see i.e. Bickes *et al.*, 2014b; Mylonas, 2015), albeit a positivity departing from a point of negativity and disadvantage. These validating representations can be argued to function through a process of *romanticisation* of Greece and they include equally stereotypical identity formations, even though these are positively disposed (Varoufakis, 2014). In research of social stereotypes it is often forgotten that stereotypes are not

only negative and degrading, but can also be positive and supportive, yet as patronising and problematic as the former (Czopp, 2008; Varoufakis, 2014).

In the case of Greece within the Euro crisis, we can distinguish at least four positive attributions, namely the roles of the 'victim', the 'rebel', the 'regime changer', and the 'underdog'. These particular roles are predominantly facilitated through the international metanarrative that places blame for the crisis on global institutions and dynamics, while they follow prior historical patterns of romanticist discourse (Haran, 2015; Varoufakis, 2014). Depending on the actors who project these representations, we can talk about different psychological dynamics. For instance, if the actor who redefines Greece in positive terms is Greek, based on the assumptions of SIT, we can talk about strategies of self-esteem enhancement or coping mechanisms towards the aforementioned identity devaluation (Huddy, 2001; Pagliaro *et al.*, 2012). In the event that the actor is not Greek, we can still talk about self-esteem enhancement since the object of 'Greece' can be said to be used to validate the actor's worldview and value system, thus identity (Huddy, 2001; Pagliaro *et al.*, 2012). The remaining section will elaborate on these issues.

Poor victim

Beginning with the role of the '*victim*', this constitutes a positive social identity in the sense that the representation of victimhood shifts the blame off a social entity, because weight is placed on its social misfortune, rather than its culpability, albeit in varying degrees and not always unconditionally (see i.e. rape victims in Du Mont *et al.*, 2003). This strategic movement can have implications for the aforementioned morality issues of deservingness and entitlement in the form of support and solidarity. Researchers confirm that negative stereotypes of national identity as 'lazy, profligate and with a rascal mentality' (Kotarski, 2012: 15) between 2010 and 2012 gave their way to representations of Greece as being in a humanitarian crisis and needing assistance to survive (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a). As such, the original stereotypes of the 'no good European' coexisted with the

stereotype of the 'victim' of a great catastrophe (Mylonas, 2012; Ntampoudi, 2013). During 2012, media representations turned their focus to 'stories of individual fates and personal tales of woe' anchored around issues of 'poverty, unemployment, job hunting and desperation' which represented a contrast with 'the earlier picture of lazy, unproductive southern Europeans enjoying siestas and early retirement' (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a: 439).

In SRT's sense, these personalised stories functioned through a personification strategy of objectification, biographically relating the crisis to personal sorrow. As a result, the media tried to convey a message that Greek people were 'suffering from politicians' mistakes, the banking crisis and economic stagnation', rather than their own fault (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a: 439). We can comment here that these narratives operate within a sharp distinction between economic and political elites on the one side, and the 'people' on the other, an argument often accused as 'populist rhetoric' (Stavrakakis, 2014), as well as structural and systemic representations of the crisis (Kutter, 2014). Furthermore, Greece was represented as a victim of the crisis management itself, as this was handled by the EU/IMF, with many arguing that austerity and accumulation of additional debt weakened the Greek economy even more, rather than strengthened it (Mylonas, 2012).

Within the war representation of Greece's relation to the EU, the delegitimising representation of the latter functions in favour of Greece by portraying the EU as an equally 'immoral' entity due to insufficient supervision and pan-European fiscal rules transgression (see, i.e. Marconi, 2011 on Germany and France's breaches), or even as a dangerous 'debt Mafia' (Mylonas, 2012). Schematically speaking, the guiltier 'Greece's opponents', the less guilty and exceptional Greece appears. As put, 'data [...] prove the general character of the transgressions: almost all EU members violated the SGP and accumulated excessive debt... Through this comparison, the Greek sovereign debt problem is constructed as a mere symptom of a larger problem' (Kutter, 2014: 457). As prescribed by SIT, social comparison is integral to the process of identity evaluation.

Following from the above, Greece was not only represented as victim of the crisis and its EU management, but also a victim of representations themselves, or in other words ‘a framed victim’ for political aims. This is most evident in the abundance of texts, expert or not, that statistically and methodologically aim to ‘deconstruct the profligacy myth’ (i.e. Kotarski, 2012; Maselli, 2015). Within these representations, authors set out to use factual data that can prove that Greeks work harder and longer hours, have fewer benefits, spend less on pensions, and retire no earlier than other Europeans, but have the highest rates of unemployment and poverty in Europe. Media presentations are plentiful with articles that explicitly and continuously ask the question ‘are Greeks *truly* lazy?’. The following titles, ranging from 2010 to 2015, demonstrate this point:

‘The myth of the lazy Greek workers’ (Editorial Board of *Marxistiki Foni*, 2010)

‘Are Greeks Lazy? Europe is a mess because Germans work hard and Greeks are shiftless. False!’ (Matthew Yglesias, 2011 for *Slate*)

‘The Greeks are not lazy’ (Dave Seminara, 2012 for *Gadling*)

‘Are Greeks the hardest workers in Europe?... the statistics tell a surprising story’ (Charlotte McDonald, 2012 for *BBC News*)

‘Greek bailout talks: Are stereotypes of lazy Greeks true?’ (Jasmine Coleman, 2015 for *BBC News*)

These representations of symbolic threat to the Greek identity and attempts of authors to ‘save face’ on behalf of Greece construct it as a victim of a symbolic ‘battle of ideas’ and can be said to be potentially consequential for social responses towards Greece around Europe (Bickes *et al.*, 2014b; Chalaniova, 2014). For example, these positive ideas may have played a role in triggering initiatives of solidarity and support (Bickes *et al.*, 2014b), as was the case with some short-lived campaigns called ‘We are all Greek’ (Hedges, 2015)²⁰. These type of campaign slogans constitute identity statements not only because they explicitly use the identity phrase ‘we are’, but also because of declaring identification with a perceived as victimised collectivity, other than one’s own. Today they constitute a common solidarity practice and there are many examples from the ‘We are all Muslim’

²⁰ See also, ‘We are all PIGS’ in EU, Collettivo Prezzemolo, 2012a, 2012b.

of Michael Moore (Tayyab, 2015) to the 'We are all Charlie' messages after the Paris attack (Mudde, 2015a). At the same time, this slogan echoed Shelley's declaration 'We are all Greeks' (Findlay, 1993), which referred to ancient Greece's cultural contribution of which everybody could be an inheritor since according to the romantic poet, Greece's 'eternal triumph' resided in the realm of the mind and the spread of a timeless idea (Beaton, 2014: 54). As such, recent patterns of romanticisation of Greece exhibited continuity, albeit a qualitatively rather differentiated one, from previous historical patterns.

Rebel rebel

Negative stereotypes of the EU as oppressive and victimising, combined with the inability or unwillingness of Greek governments to fully follow the Troika's reforming suggestions of austerity, privatisations and structural adjustments have formulated the next positively valued stereotype of Greece as the '*rebel*' (i.e. Douzinas, 2013). As described (Murray-Leach *et al.*, 2014: 3), for anti-austerity actors 'Europe as a political space was perceived as irrelevant at best; a bureaucratic servant of the neo-liberal market ethos at worst'. Picturing the EU as apolitical or as an overbearing political regime satisfies the narrative requirements not only of the 'rebel' but also of the justified 'rebel with a cause' (i.e. Bieber, 2015). In this sense, the stereotype of the rebel was anchored around the qualitative notion of the 'Eurosceptic rebel' that resists a negatively defined EU (see i.e. 'Greek rebel with a Eurosceptic cause' in *EUbusiness*, 2015). Within this context, the EU is seen as a socially disastrous agent of neoliberalism and austerity and Greece as a populist fighter against economic degradation (Mylonas, 2012; Stavrakakis, 2014), reinforcing binary oppositions and representations of war. News media, both mainstream (i.e. *The Guardian*) and self-described as 'progressive' (i.e. *Common Dreams*), as well as academic accounts, especially by self-proclaimed leftist analysts (i.e. Douzinas, 2013; Mouffe *et al.*, 2012; Laskos & Tsakalotos, 2013) are rich in representations of 'Greek resistance'.

These representations of 'heroic resistance' became even more salient during the 2015 referendum, although they preceded it. One example asserted that 'Greek resistance has symbolised a show of strength and hope to those elsewhere in the world looking for an alternative model on behalf of those marginalised by the accumulation of wealth and power in the hands of the 1% elite' (Rose, 2015 for *The Daily Blog*). In these accounts, the 'Greek people' as a unified category are described as 'the most utterly fearless group of people' (Galbraith in Parker, 2015 for the *New Yorker*), having 'stood up to the bully boys of the Troika' (Dearden in Fulton, 2015 for *Common Dreams*), and 'show[ing] the way' by 'becom[ing] the embodiment, the symbol, the soul, the life itself of the most ferocious resistance against the politics of austerity' (*Chartist*, 2014). Another commentator adds that 'Greece is the latest battleground in the financial elite's war on democracy... Greece may be financially bankrupt, but the troika is politically bankrupt. Those who persecute this nation wield illegitimate, undemocratic powers, powers of the kind now afflicting us all' (George Monbiot for *The Guardian*, 2015). As shown, Greece is explicitly described as 'bullied' and 'persecuted', thus victimised by the Troika, but simultaneously, 'heroic' and 'rebellious', while Greece's woes are presented as universal, catapulting Greek identity into universality once more.

Regime changer

Romanticising representations of Greece as a 'rebel' further constructed it as a Messiah-like game changer that holds the capacity to alter the political regime, especially as a democratic agent whose struggle was deemed universally relevant (Mylonas, 2012). This attribution of international flavour can be understood within the international crisis metanarrative which focuses on grand structures (i.e. capitalism), global institutions (i.e. the EU and IMF) and counter-ideologies (i.e. anti-capitalism). During the intensity of elections in 2012, for example, the Greek vote was represented as 'decisive' for the 'future of Europe' and Greek voters as 'powerful, independent and capable' enough to 'punish' the international lenders and 'reverse an existing social order' (Lampropoulou, 2014: 474).

Examples of expert discourse include Douzinas's (2011) argument that 'In Greece, we see democracy in action. The public debates of the outraged in Athens are the closest we have come to democratic practice in recent European history' where Syntagma Square is parallelised to the 'classical Athenian agora', as well as Žižek's public statement, standing by SYRIZA's electoral campaign, that 'The heart of the people of Europe beats in Greece' (Greek Left Review, 2012). Another example asserts that 'Greece teaches Europe about democracy again' (Kosyrev, 2011), inverting the teaching metaphor of the Eurozone and transferring Greece from the position of the 'bad pupil' to that of the 'teacher'²¹. We can evaluate that these representational patterns construct romanticised and universalised notions of Greece and reintroduce past trends of universality and political romanticism that create equally unrealistic 'great expectations' as their previous historical trends have done in the past.

SYRIZA itself, during its Europhile conversion in 2012 and the abandonment of previous radical positions against the EU as a tactic for expanding its electoral base by employing moderation and simultaneously creating a diplomatic relation with the EU, made expansive symbolic use of this narrative that demands 'an other, more democratic Europe' (see i.e. Panagopoulos, 2015 for Avgi; also, TheTOC, 2014). Within this narrative, SYRIZA's message was that Europe had lost its democratic credentials and had to regain them. Moreover, these dynamics can also be understood within a wider representation of Greece's relation with the core of the EU as anchored around the axis of the economic and the cultural (Tekin, 2014), whereby Greece's response overemphasises its cultural and political credentials as equally, if not more, prototypically defining features of European identity, compared to economic ones (Ntampoudi, 2014a).

In this respect, the idea of Greece being a 'bad European' due to its failed economy and administration is answered by reclaiming the meaning of Europeanness as being about belief in the values of democracy and pluralism (Ntampoudi, 2014a). As such, the representation of 'Europe' waging an 'economic war' against Greece is juxtaposed by the representation of Greece answering

²¹ See also, Michta (2015) on Grexit as a 'lesson' for Europe's democratic deficit.

with a 'symbolic war' based on political arguments about democracy, diversity and pluralism. These dynamics reaffirm SIT's assumption that in the context of a superordinate identity like the European each member-state may project its national prototype onto the European one (Castano, 2004).

Nevertheless, although Greece was extensively stereotyped and recreated as the game-changing 'democratic agent', there were additional representations. Alternatively, albeit to a lesser extent, extreme right-wing groups in Europe (i.e. in Denmark and Sweden) found in Greece's rise of the Golden Dawn a 'nationalist star' to identify with and draw inspiration from, as well as 'a victim of the multiculturalist/Marxist project of the EU' (Askanus & Mylonas, 2015: 65). In these right-wing representations, generated by European Northerners, Greeks are their 'brothers and sisters' who 'did not accept that the fruits of their hard labour were harvested by strangers' and deserving of celebratory compliments, such as 'Congratulations Greece! We are marching with you' (examples as cited in Askanius & Mylonas, 2015). Additionally, admiration was expressed in statements such as 'although we are not as big as you yet, it is fantastic to see how the NS movement is growing stronger every week. Heil the North!' (as cited in *ibid*).

In many respects, the EU itself became a rather varied 'victimiser', ranging from the neoliberal to the Marxist, as well as a representation of the 'common enemy' of all the 'peoples' of Europe, north and south, left and right of the political spectrum, making nationalist Euroscepticism a common denominator (Halikiopoulou *et al.*, 2012). In this way, it appears comprehensible that the radical-left SYRIZA could form a coalition government with the nationalist ANEL, united in their opposition to the EU's Memorandum. This can be seen in the historical precedent of the *National Schism* where as regards to the internationally-oriented Venizelos,

'There were Venizelist nationalists and anti-Venizelist nationalists, Venizelist Marxists and anti-Venizelist Marxists. And it was a thousand times easier for a Venizelist nationalist to reach an understanding with a Venizelist Marxist, than with an anti-Venizelist nationalist' (Theotokas in Clogg, 2002: 87)

Similarly, in Greece during the economic crisis, it was easier to unite a Marxist and a nationalist as a 'rebellious national front' against the perceived enemy of the EU, rather than expect left wing parties to work with each other.

Underdog Greece

All these elements of victimhood, rebellion and democratic or nationalist struggle ultimately culminate in the stereotype of Greece during the crisis as the perfect '*underdog*'. This can be seen as a sign of resonance with expert representations of the past regarding the Greek underdog political culture. Within a typical underdog storyline a small and weak entity fights against a much bigger and stronger one, and although the underdog is expected to lose, it ends up winning against all odds by exhibiting 'evidence of heart and spirit' and 'heroism' (McGinnis & Gentry, 2009: 195; Goethals & Allison, 2012).

Underdog stories are considered to be archetypal and diachronic narrative structures, and for these reasons highly stereotypical and widely familiar (Goldschmied & Vandello, 2009; Kim *et al.*, 2008). As such, they are publicly shared tales with the oldest and most known examples of the Bible story of *David and Goliath* or *Leonidas's 300 Spartans* at the Thermopyles battle (Kim *et al.*, 2008; Vandello *et al.*, 2007). Underdog scripts are empirically known to invoke responses of identification and support as a result of the human abilities of empathy and identification with others, but also various psychological needs, such as those for justice and inspiration (Kim *et al.*, 2008; McGinnis & Gentry, 2009).

Moreover, underdog identities can be a vehicle for the achievement of positive self-esteem, as prescribed by SIT, because of the heroism and romantic sensibility that is frequently associated with them, as well as their moralising character that assumes the necessary culpability of the powerful (Ntampoudi, 2014b). In this respect, we can appreciate that in the occasion that Greeks embrace this identity script for themselves, it establishes a self-enhancing tactic that creates a positive and moral

image of the collective self by means of social comparison and delegitimation of the opponent (Ntampoudi, 2014b). In the case of non-Greeks who support the underdog representation of Greece during the crisis, this satisfies their personal self-constructions of their own political identities as revolutionary underdog defenders which appeal not only to personal self-esteem, but also the validation of these actors' worldview of conflictual politics and grand malevolent structures (Ntampoudi, 2014b).

Conclusively, although other 'programme countries'²² such as Portugal and Ireland were positively represented as 'good pupils' of the EU and 'poster-children' of compliance and reform, Greece's representational trajectory followed alternative routes of positive identity evaluations, often embracing its pre-existing and newly intensified stereotypes of the 'disadvantaged victim', 'resistant rebel', 'democratic agent', 'nationalist star' and 'heroic underdog'. As was noted, these narratives found more resonance among social circles that are fonder of radical politics, such as self-identifying left-wing, post-colonialist, post-modernist and critical theorists, who repeatedly signed letters of solidarity to Greece, alliance to SYRIZA, and sharp criticism towards the EU (i.e. Badiou, 2012; Mouffe *et al.*, 2012; Žižek, 2012) or extreme right-wing forces in Europe who saw in Greece's right-wing Eurosceptic resistance their own 'nationalist hero' and rebel against European multiculturalism and Marxism (Askanius & Mylonas, 2015). In this sense, Greece's identity experienced episodes of overvaluation and objectifications as an object of solidarity and support. Ultimately, Greece became the 'poster-child' for political radicalism and Eurosceptic resistance, as well as an object of political affection and discursive exploitation for radicals and rebels on left, right and beyond of the political spectrum. As shall be illustrated, such identity overvaluations and overexpansions can lead to identity deficits, which is the focus of the next section.

²² Although the term 'programme countries' in the context of the Euro crisis literally refers to crisis management and adjustment programmes, a note may also be made for the metaphorical allusion of the term which is suggestive of ideas like 'addiction', 'recovery' or 'rehabilitation' (i.e. Alcoholics Anonymous' 'the programme'), additionally linking to the aforementioned disease metaphor of the economic crisis in Europe.

Identity deficit: exclusion through Grexit

Sovereignty interrupted

During the economic crisis, many public and expert representations claimed that Greece's sovereignty had been severely compromised (Mitsikopoulou & Lykou, 2015; Mylonas, 2015; Tracy, 2012). For example, former Italian finance minister, the late Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa stated that 'Greece is no longer the sole sovereign in its home; the European sovereign has entered its territory and will also rule' (as cited in Marconi, 2011). Media (i.e. Cassidy for *The New Yorker*, 2015; Steel for *The Independent*, 2015; *The Economist*, 2015), but also academics (i.e. Herzfeld, 2016b; Smith, 2014), dramatizing the crisis, have openly referred to this process and the wider EU crisis response towards Greece as 'humiliating', especially after the 2015 referendum and the agreement that followed it, which indicates the depth of national devaluation that Greece is presented to have endured, since terms like 'humiliation' connote a certain emotional intensity (Smith, 2014).

Following from the above narratives of EU imposition and Greek resistance, the politically bitter issue of national sovereignty comes to the forth. Many have argued that the Memoranda necessarily imposed a significant degree of surveillance on Greece by the Troika (Dinas & Rori, 2013; Marconi, 2011). This historically echoes the period of the *International Financial Commission* (IFC) that was established in Greece in 1898, after Greece had declared bankruptcy in 1893 (Clogg, 2002; Waibel, 2014). The IFC was comprised of representatives of six European creditor countries until WWI and had substantial authorities of appointment, dismissal and revenues control (Dyson, 2014; Waibel, 2014). However, this control was not as direct as was the case with Egypt, Serbia and the Ottoman Empire's debt-serving commissions, a difference that was represented as 'out of the question in a highly democratic country like Greece' (Tunçer, 2015).

Similar to contemporary circumstances of mutual credibility deficits, the IFC was then confronted with as much domestic distrust, resistance and sovereignty claims (Dyson, 2014; Tunçer, 2015;

Waibel, 2014) as the Troika is today, while correspondingly, during the thirties and after Greece's default of 1932, many believed that the Greek government was more unwilling, rather than incapable, to cooperate with reforms or repay its debts (RIIA, 1937; Tunçer, 2015; Waibel, 2014). It would be fair to say that in the international arena, a country's perceived or real loss of sovereignty is tantamount to losing its international identity since being unable to fully form one's own foreign and domestic policy equals to losing one's own voice in global affairs. As put, 'sovereignty is a social identity... both a property of states and of international society' (Wendt, 1994: 388). In this sense, we could say that Greece has experienced an identity destabilisation in the form of an identity loss, thus deficit, to the degree that Greece's sovereignty is perceived as compromised.

Grexit as European identity loss

The issue of Greece's identity loss, especially at the European dimension, becomes most apparent within the context of the Grexit possibility, which has been a continuous, yet contradictory, discussion throughout the crisis years (Koutsoukis & Roukanas, 2014). Questions of European identity have been presented as intimately related to Greece's Eurozone membership (Giurlando, 2016; Tekin, 2014). Two specific examples of articles that were published during the announcement of the 2011 and 2015 referenda respectively will be used here to illustrate this point because of the overt associations they make between Eurozone membership and European identity. Most interestingly, the articles share the identical title 'Greece's European Identity [Is] at Stake' (Barber, 2011 for the *Financial Times*; Nixon, 2015 for *The Wall Street Journal*). In the first article, before the exposition of a concise historical presentation of Greece's ambivalent position in Europe and the EU, faithful to the dominant narratives that were analysed in the previous chapter, the author states:

'Aside from the existential question of the Eurozone's survival, what is at stake in the debt crisis is nothing less than the European identity of contemporary Greek society. This would be put to a severe test if Greece were to tumble out of the Eurozone and suffer the mother of all economic and social implosions' (Barber, 2011)

Nowhere in the article is it explained why this is so, although the implicit message lies in the symbolic linkage of the currency to the question of identity and belonging. The same is the case with the second article of 2015, where the author observes:

‘It is Greece’s European identity that is at stake in the referendum that the government has decided to call for July 5. Although the question on the ballot will be whether voters want the government to accept or reject the terms of the bailout deal submitted by creditors, the real question is whether Greece wishes to remain a member of the Eurozone’ (Nixon, 2015)

In this second article, the author justifies his claim by explaining that because there is no legal framework or precedent for a country leaving the Eurozone, as an extension, its EU membership could be jeopardised. Nevertheless, given that some countries are members of the EU, but not of the Eurozone (i.e. the UK, Sweden, Denmark) (Hobolt, 2015), while others are considered part of Europe, but neither of the EU or the Eurozone (i.e. Serbia, Albania, Switzerland) (Mau & Mewes, 2013), the ways that EU/Eurozone memberships relate to European identity remain unclear in the texts, despite the claimed clarity of the conclusive intimacy between the two by the authors (Giurlando, 2016). In SRT’s terms, an implicit representation of the two articles is the objectification of the Euro currency as the criterion of European belongingness, functioning through the process of ontologisation which attributes a material characteristic to a non-material entity (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014). In this case, the material object of the Euro currency becomes the ontological substance of the immaterial notion of European identity.

This type of representation is not uncommon in the discursive history of European integration as prior research has indicated that the Euro has been portrayed as a powerful identity marker and indicator of European citizenship (Kaeble, 2009; Moro, 2013a). Within the Euro crisis, research has shown that EU leaders’ rhetoric has often equated the Euro with Europe itself (Tekin, 2014). For example, Merkel has stated that ‘if Euro fails, Europe fails’ (in Spiegel, 2011b). As explained, the Euro concerns ‘the content, the context, and the constraints of citizenship of the EU and of its constituent elements of rights, belonging and participation’, a ‘shaping effect’ of the currency that has ‘not been

contradicted, but on the contrary, made more visible by the present Eurozone crisis' (Moro, 2013b: 232). Following from this relation, and given the permanence of the Grexit probability, Greece has been repeatedly depicted as being at the edge of losing its Eurozone belonging and participation, thus experiencing the imminent threat of a European identity loss, hence an identity deficit (Giurlando, 2016).

Pretty vacant

Finally, as explained before, Greece's public coverage was both quantitatively larger and qualitatively more negative and controversial than other countries' coverage (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Tzogopoulos, 2013; Tekin, 2014). This can be argued to have led to the misfortune of becoming not only a representational epicentre of the crisis, but also to being represented as 'notoriously scandalous' just like most 'transgressive antitypes' and 'anti-ideals' are constructed (Kittredge, 2003: 1). In the era of the internet's 'global village' (McLuhan, 2009) and all the expansive communicative possibilities that this unleashes, social entities are often subjected to excessive commentary and evaluation, both quantitatively and qualitatively (Solove, 2007). This becomes particularly acute when these social entities are perceived to have done something wrong. In such cases, they can become the objects of debates and controversies (Solove, 2007). The longer these dynamics last, the more notorious and scandalous the entity's identity appears to be and the more expansive the identity projections upon it become. Once a state of notoriety is reached, the social entity can be anything from an abject perpetrator to a framed victim, a 'persona-non-grata' or a 'public sweetheart'. As put by a Brussels correspondent,

'looking at what the European newspapers wrote in the wake of the Greek crisis, a reader might have the impression that everybody saw what he wanted to see in the Greek case: the failures of left-wing governments, the evil speculation on the markets, the resurgence of a German superpower, even US imperialism' (Marconi, 2011).

As demonstrated above, Greece has been portrayed by various discursive actors as many things: a guilty trickster, a decadent society, a poor victim of global capitalism, the target of the EU's neo-liberalism, a defiant underdog, an economic terrorist, a radical-left rebel, a nationalist star, a democratic agent, a European impostor, a European prototype, and more. Such is the fate of notorious entities: the more they are talked about, the more they cease to exist by becoming everything, therefore being nothing. As such, in this paradoxical sense, this overexpansion of identity may perhaps be the most vivid way in which Greece 'lost its self' within the crisis discourse and became a perfectly 'empty signifier'.

Summary and conclusion

This chapter attempted to explore emerging knowledge on Greek European identity and the economic crisis, looking for significations of identity destabilisations. It begun by explaining that the public discourse of the Euro crisis is dominated by two main metanarratives of causation and ontology, with the one emphasising domestic factors and the other one focusing on systemic and international factors. As an extension, while the first primarily asserted accountability on sovereign governments for the crisis causes, the second affirmed the responsibility of structural and global conditions. Furthermore, it was evident that these two narratives were implicated within varied representations of the economic crisis.

In terms of identity conflict, the first representation of social conflict was registered at the domestic level, whereby dynamics of social tension were noted between political elites and citizens, among elites, and among citizens. Cultural dualism was said to experience a revival as an explanatory framework of the economic crisis and the underdog culture appeared to have been blamed for the origins of the crisis. These dynamics spilt over to another dualist representation, albeit one concretised around a new point of reference, namely, the Memorandum, resulting in a pro-Memorandum and an anti-Memorandum camp and political polarisation. The referendum of July

2015 appeared to be the peak of this polarisation as well as the lowest point of diplomacy between Greece and the EU, especially between Greece and Germany. Traces of anti-Germanism were observable, while the 'politics of blaming' between the two crisis metanarratives appeared to trigger an identity conflict at the European dimension of Greece's identity.

At the level of identity devaluation, the category of Greece appeared to have objectified in multiple metaphors and scripts that casted Greece in a variety of 'villain' roles, such as an 'economic terrorist', a 'disease' or a 'bad pupil', among others. Furthermore, there were indications that Greece's identity underwent devaluating episodes, articulated by a process of culturalisation of the discussion of the crisis, and the creation of negative stereotypes. As was demonstrated, these stereotypes, which mainly revolved around the objects of laziness, profligacy and corruption, were not always overtly stated, but nevertheless circulated in indirect ways. Furthermore, various processes of exceptionalisation appeared to have taken place, which resulted in Greece's isolation, particularly when member-states would choose to symbolically distance themselves from the case of Greece or make an example of it. As an extension of these two processes, representational dynamics of moralisation became prominent, whereby Greek European identity was constructed as undeserving of its national and European possessions, was deemed worthy of punishment and short of the emerging European prototype.

Subsequently, it was argued that contrary to conventional thinking about stereotypes as solely negative, there were positive stereotypes about Greece created during the economic crisis. For example, it was demonstrated that Greece was represented not only as a subject for bashing, but also as a subject for solidarity and support on the basis of victimhood, either at the humanitarian or the political domain. In addition, Greek identity was represented as rebellious, while romanticising and universalising narratives of game-changing political capacity were attributed to Greece, as either a 'democratic agent' or a 'nationalist star'. All these representations culminated in the underdog identity schema which resonated with prior expert understandings of Greece's political culture.

Regarding identity deficits, national identity loss was identified at the register of national sovereignty to the degree that this was represented as compromised, since sovereignty can be understood as external and international identity. A vivid European identity loss as a precarious possibility was recognised at the public discussion of Grexit, whereby a potential exit from the currency was projected as an identity threat. Finally, it was argued that Greece's identity underwent such great over-expansions that ended up becoming an 'empty signifier', hence acquired a symbolic status of identity deficit.

Conclusively, we could say that the public realm of discourses and representations offered a rich and expanded field where ideas of conflict, devaluation, overvaluation and deficit existed in abundance. It remains to be seen how Greek experts themselves negotiate and mediate these representations in the Greek context, which is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Greek Ideational Leaders on Identity and Crisis

'in the Northern countries we had the PIGS of the South... on the other side, we had Merkel with Hitler's moustache in Athens... unfortunately, as is said, the victim of every war is the truth, and the first casualty of every crisis is rationality... [...] those of us who exercise public discourse have an obligation to calm this atmosphere down... we may lose our income, possibly even our jobs... but let us not lose our soul and our rationality. This would be the worst of all...'

(Papakonstantinou, 2014)

Introduction

After having looked at historiographical representations of Greek European identity and constructions of it during the economic crisis, this chapter will move on with outlining the results of interviews held with Greek ideational leaders in Athens, including politicians, journalists and academics. As argued before, expert professionals are important 'opinion-shapers' and these three wide professional domains dynamically interact and influence with each other, not only because individuals often occupy multiple professional roles and engage with multiple activities, but also because they interact with other professionals (Stavridis, 2003: 5). For example, academics often appear in the media or participate in policy-making (Stavridis, 2003). Although there are various past studies on policy formation and Europeanisation (i.e. Featherstone & Papadimitriou, 2008) or analyses of the Greek media (i.e. Exadaktylos & Capelos, 2016; Mylonas, 2014) that can be used as proxies for understanding the stands of politicians, experts and journalists, it should be noted that these cannot offer a direct link to attitudes and justifications for choices in the same manner that elite and expert interviewing can do.

As a consequence, interview data on Greek ideational leaders and their opinions on matters related to EU/European identities are extremely scarce. The literature review only reveals a handful of studies (Esaïasson 1999; Nezi *et al.*, 2009a, 2009b; Stavridis, 2003). Earlier studies of Greek MPs (Esaïasson, 1999) showed that compared to other European MPs, they had a rather instrumentalist view of the EU as a vehicle for economic development. Nezi *et al.*'s study (2009a) revealed that there were traditionalists, formalists, and liberals among the MPs, while their trust in EU institutions and their perceptions of EU policy areas and levels of policymaking were strongly influenced by political ideology and party affiliation. A traditionalist approach towards identity included facets such as religion, birthplace, and parents' nationality, liberalism encompassed respect for laws and institutions, and formalism concerned conditional formal requirements for acquiring Greek citizenship. Left-leaning MPs showed little trust in EU institutions and did not welcome the prospect of the EU becoming more active in the formulation of policies. Centre-right and centre-left politicians had pro-European attitudes.

Most importantly, Nezi *et al.*'s study (2009a) compares MPs' opinions with public opinion and gives us an indication of the state of dissonance or resonance thereof between them. As revealed, there were differences of limited intensity in the way Greek MPs and public opinion understood the notion of European and national identity (Nezi *et al.*, 2009a). Some differences though concerned the citizens trusting the European Parliament less than MPs did and thinking that decisions on key policies, such as immigration, the environment, organised crime, and health should be taken at the national level, rather than both national and European.

Another study by Nezi *et al.* (2009b) compared Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian parliamentarians' attitudes towards European integration and discovered that MPs of all countries had a positive view of EU institutions, while Greek MPs trusted them more than the other two countries' MPs. MPs of parties of the extreme right or of nationalist parties trusted the institutions less than MPs of parties which were conservative, liberal or socialist and generally are closer to the centre of the party

system. Furthermore, Greek MPs believed in furthering the process of EU unification more than Bulgarian and Serbian MPs. Longer familiarity with EU institutions via membership and long-term economic benefits were cited as possible explanations for these differences.

A study of Greek academics' views on the Europeanisation of Greek foreign policy (Stavridis, 2003) showed that academics could be separated into three groups: 1) the optimists who claimed that the Europeanisation of Greek foreign policy was a positive development and on its way to materialisation, 2) the sceptics who were circumspect generally about the Europeanisation of Greece or its foreign policy in particular, and 3) the critics who denied there was any Europeanisation of Greece's foreign policy and instead talked about 'Africanisation', 'Sub-Saharanisation' or 'Balkanisation'. Divisions between East and West were mentioned in relation to Greece's Europeanisation, while the latter was intertwined with questions of modernisation and democratisation. There was an overwhelming consensus on the positive side for Europeanisation, and only a few questioned whether other member-states want Greece to remain in the EU or gave negative views about Greece's success in Europeanising itself.

The results of the present study indicate that political ideology plays a part in attitudes towards the EU, allowing for greater criticism of European integration. This criticism is by no means a rejection of EU membership, but rather constitutes a 'critical Europeanism' that embraces the project of European unification, yet on different grounds to the existing. In many respects, EU membership was projected as a one-way street for Greece and was widely unchallenged, indicating what could be seen as a profound and long-term investment in perceived benefits gained by EU membership, even for the most critical leftists. Notions of Greece resembling other regions of the world, rather than Europe were similarly projected as in the past (i.e. in Stavridis, 2003), but in this case they did not only concern Greek policy failures, but also fears of Greece's becoming in light of the economic crisis. These findings are enriched by multiple other representations, the details of which shall be presented hereafter.

Identity conflict: divisions of European identities

In chapter three, it was explained that historiographical representations of Greece focused on the ideas of deep national divisions, i.e. nationalists and internationalists or traditionalists and modernizers, as well as the conflict between East and West, seen as constituting Greece's 'problem of hybridity'. Chapter four elaborated on representations of Greece during the Eurozone crisis and concentrated on narratives of blaming between North and South and divisions of European identities, as well as domestic schisms between citizens and elites, among elites and among citizens. Based on our ideational leaders' interviews, the most dominant representation in terms of identity conflict was the schism between East and West, and between North and South at the European level. As such, we can comment that the most common cognitive schema was a rather geographical one, utilising the four corners of spatial orientation, a representation which could be called 'geo-schematic'. As a result, it is argued here that geo-schematic perceptions of identity crises were hegemonic representations in the interviews. The next most dominant representations of conflict were those of 'Greek hybridity', defined as Greece being 'both European and non-European', 'lack of national consensus', and 'mutual stereotyping' at the European context. The remaining section will elaborate on these themes in more detail.

Still between East and West: a strategic hybridity?

Beginning with the historical distinction between East and West, as explained, this featured as a dominant schema. At a first analytical level, there was the expected commonly shared narrative that Greece is a country that indeed resides between the East and West and has been historically torn between the two identity paradigms. As illustrated,

'in modern Greek history, since 1821, there is a huge conflict between what we'd call Occidentalists and Orientalists, that is, there are some who say that we belong to the East, and there are some who say that we belong to the West' (Mandravelis)

‘[with] the entrance in the European family... a country that had always been between East and West was finally concretely hooked in the European structure...’ (Mitsotakis)

‘Greece has always been at the borderline between East and West, there has always been since the birth of the Greek nation-state, and ever earlier than that, there was this [distinction], that is, many well-travelled Greeks said that Greece’s future is in the West, but also many well-travelled Greeks who said the opposite, that essentially we are the East...’ (Tsakloglou)

Although most of the time, so-called Occidentalists and Orientalists were referred to in abstraction, as ‘those who said West’ or ‘those who said East’, few participants alluded to the schematic associations of Occidentalists being identified as elites, rational or educated, and Orientalists as radicals, religious or traditionalists (i.e. Giannakou, Pagoulatos, Sotiropoulos). We could comment that these allusions may be reproducing stereotypical ideas of the representations ‘West’ and ‘East’ as rational/progressive and irrational/backwards, respectively.

This age-old identity conflict was confirmed to be intimately related with the question of Greece’s Europeaness and aforementioned ‘problem of hybridity’. The cognitive schema of hybridity was present even when participants did not use the poles of East/West as elements of cultural mixture and simply referred to being/not being European. Nevertheless, most respondents placed Greece’s hybridity within this geo-schematic spectrum to variable degrees. Hybridity was particularly apparent in the compound question-theme ‘What makes a country European? Is Greece a European country?’ that was discussed with the participants. In this instance, a clear majority responded that Greece is simultaneously European and non-European/Oriental. Some participants implied or clearly stated that Greece is largely not European, and only a very small minority said that Greece is European. However, these last few were sceptical of the term ‘European identity’ as such, and thought of it as either highly pluralist (Simiti), non-existent (Karathanasopoulos) or ideological (Kimpouropoulos). Overall, hybridity was widely accepted as a persistently dominant collective self-schema and almost none of the participants firmly stated that Greece is unambiguously and unproblematically European.

Within these wider responses, there were four main narratives: 1) Greece is a European country, but with Oriental/non-European features, 2) Greece is an Oriental/Balkan country that tries to be European, 3) Greece is capable of becoming more European, if it tries, and 4) Greece is in danger of becoming an Oriental/Balkan/Global South country due to the crisis's effects. While the first two narratives concern *identity as being*, what Greece is, the last two refer to *identity as becoming*, what Greece could become.

Within the first narrative, the Western/European and Ottoman/Oriental past of Greece is acknowledged and Greece is identified as European at least to some degree, but is categorised as non-European due to a variety of cultural features. For example, ND politician, Marietta Giannakou commented,

'Greece is a European country, but it has peculiarities... because it resisted to issues related to rationalism, perhaps this is a civilisational issue, maybe the influence of the East, which some adore, but it is certainly a European country, not only because of its location here, but also because of the values and principles upon which Europe was based, the ancient Greek spirit... together with the Roman and Hebrew...' (Giannakou)

Within this narrative the prototype of European identity appears to be based on historical and civilisational criteria. In the second narrative, projected by respondents who thought that Greece is largely not European, a more expanded set of cultural features were discussed and enacted to shortages of European identity. For example, DIMAR MP and historian, Maria Repousi elaborated that Greece is not European because...

'...Greece is a European country *à la carte*, when it comes to accepting the other, the different, the minority... it is not a European country, it is Balkan, Oriental, I don't what it is, but definitely not European... it is not a European country because it praises its own civilisation and thinks it is above all others, there are issues of Europeanisation of the country in terms of European principles... even in the notion of democracy... in Greece it is questionable, first of all, we have the phenomenon of the Golden Dawn... moreover, we have a very skewed perception of democracy, we think it is about everyone doing whatever they want, we have a disobedience and a non-respect for laws, which is considered *tsampoukas*²³... so after all these, one has to wonder how European Greece is, and what a long way it has to go to become European...' (Repousi)

²³ 'Tsampoukas' is a slang Greek word standing for being 'tough' and 'pushy'.

Within this example, the European identity prototype is defined by political, ethical and legal criteria. This quotation exemplifies not only the view that Greece is not European, which is equated to Balkan/Oriental, but also several other themes that were shared by many other respondents and were relevant to Greece's hybridity. For example, the expression 'a European country *à la carte*' indicates the notion of *selectivity*, in the sense that Greece is a country that selects only some principles of European identity, but not all. Within the representation of selectivity, it is implied that Greece chooses the aspects that are convenient for it, but not those that are seen as inconvenient, i.e. going the way to become more inclusive and egalitarian. This self-serving social attitude then could be labelled as *strategic hybridity*, with Greece seen as strategically selecting which aspects of the European identity to follow or not. Several other interviewees referred to what they perceived as Greece's selectivity.

'Greece is an Oriental country that wants to take from Europe whatever is beneficial for her'
(Ramfos)

'We never understood that the participation in the European family means not only rights, but also duties. We were doing well with the rights, but [not] with the duties' (Mitsotakis)

'The Greek feels European without wanting to follow the European standards, in any field, from driving behaviour to cheating at exams' (Panousis)

'You can't be living with Western living standards, and say that you are East' (Mandravelis)

As is apparent, within these representations Greece or Greek citizens are described as self-interested and selective, therefore hybridity is understood as highly deliberate and self-serving. However, not all participants presented Greece's strategic hybridity as specific to Greece alone. For example, former MEP, Nikos Chrysogelos commented that Greece only ever cared about extracting funds from the EU, without seeing it as a space where democracy could grow, which constitutes a

selective way of understanding EU participation, but then clarified that this was not peculiar to Greece alone.

‘we haven’t achieved yet making countries feel that they are European, that is, to perceive their own interests as intimately related to the wellbeing of the whole of Europe... only then we could say that countries are European... Germany wants the EU to exist, but also wants to define it. Greece would like to be a European country as long as it always gets its way. Italy wants to be a European country as long as it is an Italian Europe... the perspective is still wired through our own being dominant in Europe’ (Chrysogelos)

As shown, the European prototype is viewed here as defined nationally with each nation-state projecting their own prototype upon the European, which resonates with SIT’s assumptions.

Nevertheless, there were alternative representations of selective hybridity that were presented as less selfish. For example, one of the reasons that many participants thought that Greece was not European was the view that rule-following behaviour is lacking in Greece, as seen in Repousi’s and Panousis’s quotations above (also, in Lyritzis, Pagoulatos, Ramfos), which was seen as a negative social attitude. Some participants mentioned that there were character features that were seen as Greek or Mediterranean, such as ‘warmth’, ‘emotionality’, ‘empathy’ and ‘expressivity’ which were evaluated positively, but their ‘excesses’ were argued to need to be ‘tamed’ by laws and norms, which were seen as European/Northern features (Giannakou, Mitsotakis, Panousis, Ramfos). Within this representation, which can be said to reproduce traditional positive stereotypes of the constructions of the European ‘South’ and ‘North’, there was an implicit narrative that a desirable balance could, and should, be achieved between the acclaimed ‘soulfulness’ of the European South and the ‘rule-following rationality’ of the European North.

This happier resolution of the ‘problem of hybridity’, as a highly selective feature that could combine what could be seen as ‘the best of both worlds’, was explicitly evident in one participant’s self-description.

‘I want to be a European citizen as far as services I receive from the state are concerned, the airplanes leaving on time, the trains arriving on time, the constitution being respected, democracy functioning well... but in other issues I want to be Oriental, issues like

entertainment for instance, or culinary matters... I am a contradiction just like many Greeks are, isn't that so?' (Pappas)

These accounts exemplify a different view on the question of hybridity which is more charitable, compared to the representations of either 'self-interested Greek selectivity' or 'positive European stereotypes versus negative Oriental stereotypes'.

Participants who belonged to fringe left-wing parties, like Thanasis Kampagiannis from ANTARSYA (SEK fraction), and consequently held highly critical views towards the EU/Europe, was very sceptical of European identity and argued that it contained 'a lot of racism within it' which was 'based on an exclusion of all that exists in the East and the South, but not what is in the North', therefore a cosmopolitan identity rather than a European was highly preferable, by which token, Greece's hybrid existence between 'the European, Asian and African experiences' was an asset, rather than a hindrance. Although this argument could be interpreted as attempting to strategically represent Greece through creating positive self-schemas, the participant added that this desired cosmopolitan identity was a choice, thus not necessarily a given characteristic of the whole of Greek society. As such, it was not enacted to a feature of Greek national identity as such, but rather it was projected as an argument in favour of diversity, a feature which was clearly not seen as a facet of European identity.

Attempts were made to elucidate the reasons that participants gave for Greece's Europeanness, or lack of it thereof, a task which produced interesting results. Looking at why Greece was thought to be European, there was a rather small number of factors that was offered as justification. These only included two factors, namely Greece being foundational of European identity due to the ancient Greek tradition, which was the primary schema, and second, geographical location. Few participants mentioned common history, even fewer referred to the lack of other options ('what else could Greece be?'), and very few suggested adherence to political values, such as democracy and human rights. Since these last three justifications were not widely shared throughout the interviews or were

contested, they cannot be said to amount to concrete reasons for believing that Greece is indeed European. As such, it would be fair to say that expert participants were unable to offer multiple and concretely contemporary reasons for Greece being European.

In contrast, all participants, including those who said that Greece is both European and non-European, could readily identify multiple reasons as to why Greece was not European. These reasons included several features, such as the well-established Oriental character, but also not obeying laws, being selective, not having a European culture, feeling inferior to Europe, having a long way to go before becoming European, holding certain religious values, lacking support for the EU, lacking respect for human rights, lacking rationality, being anti-Western, having a party like Golden Dawn, becoming impoverished by the economic crisis, being located at the periphery of Europe, believing in Greek superiority, having no functioning democracy or institutions, being undisciplined, not being a 'normal country', having low credibility, and missing out on major European historical developments, like the Enlightenment.

Correspondingly, it is not only the Greek prototype that becomes apparent, but also the European one, which is sketched out as the opposite of these features, i.e. not being Oriental, obeying laws, not being selective, and so on. We can conclude from the above that although there was a wealth of justifications for Greece not being European, the number of reasons as to why Greece was indeed European was significantly more limited, indicating that Greek ideational leaders have difficulties imagining Greece's European belonging in expansive terms. As such, it can be argued that Greece's European identity was not confidently or intensely claimed, but instead it was highly problematised and questioned.

Possible identities at the border

While within the above two narratives the question of Greece's *being* was assessed, in the third and fourth narrative the question revolved around Greece's *becoming*. The question of becoming is

crucial to hybridity because hybrid entities which are seen as being in vacillation between two or more forces, thus an identity conflict, are typically associated with 'borderline identities' (Rajasingham-Senanayake, 2001) that could slip towards the one or the other pole. As put by journalist, Tasos Pappas, because of Greece's history, 'Europe' and 'the Orient' repeatedly collide with each other at different historical intervals and every time they do, the one or the other dominates. Some participants expressed the concern that Greece is in peril of choosing the non-European side of its identity, indicating that in light of the economic crisis Greece's European identity was seen as a rather precarious one, in danger of being minimised or even lost. For example, Mavrotas commented, 'the European seed exists within the Greek, but... the great danger for Greece is to reject that and turn towards, not Europe, but the Orient, the South'. This last point illustrates that the crisis has brought to the fore questions of Greece's 'identity choice'. As put by Georgiadou, 'the European identity is also a choice, [but] this choice is not always strong [in Greece]'.

In this respect, according to the third narrative, many participants alluded to the possibility of Greece becoming European or more European, if various features changed. This was not necessarily expressed as a certain or achievable possible outcome, mostly depending on the interviewee's level of optimism as opposed to pessimism about the future. However, it was important to the degree that it clarified that the prototypical ontological assumption of European identity was that it is something to be learnt and achieved, rather than a given. For example, the question of possibility was seen in Repousi's quotation above in the phrase 'what a long way [Greece] has to go to become European', which perhaps could be categorised as part of the less optimistic examples. Other participants proposed the following:

'the tendency... is to avoid... the image of the computer that is littered by the oily souvlaki... the prospects are good... it takes time and a lot of work to be able to say one day... that we are a European country that lives based on laws that we decide...' (Lyritzis)

'I want to believe that slowly we start showing some credibility, I hope this stays, an effort of institutional Europeanisation' (Panousis)

‘we should become more European in issues like... more organisation, discipline, that will come to tame the traditional Greek temperament’ (Mitsotakis)

Once again, these comments exemplify the cognitive associations to the object of European identity, such as high technology (i.e. ‘computer’), clean (i.e. ‘not littered’), laws, credibility, organisation, discipline. Achieving these identity features is considered to transform Greece into a European country. The clarification of what is considered ‘European’ is explicitly stated in the following example that constructs specific associations.

‘all these weaknesses... mean that the country [Greece] departs from the high standards that make a European country... this is good because, on the one side, we recognise that anything European is synonymous to quality and civilisation, and on the other side, we recognise that we have many weaknesses that need to be overcome’ (Kratsa)

Although several participants associated Europeanness with various superior standards, whether cultural, institutional, or political, this tendency was not universal. As indicated above, critical fringe left-wing parties associate European identity with racism (Kampagiannis from ANTARSYA/SEK), or a vehicle of propaganda in the hands of capitalist elites aiming to disorient people from class struggles by orienting them towards ethnic divisions (Karathanasopoulos from KKE) and a form of imperialism and intervention (Kazakis from EPAM). These alternative representations shape the European prototype in radically different ways as non-egalitarian, controlling and intruding.

In the fourth narrative, concerns were expressed that Greece may soon resemble Balkan, Latin American, African or Asian countries, rather than European, due to the effects of the economic crisis. At this instance, it became clearer that the European prototype was equated with developed economies and high living standards (Litsis), and the EU as the only factor keeping Greece intact from the crisis effects. For example, quite a few participants spiritedly commented on Greece’s feared possible identity.

‘[without Europe]...with such crisis, Greece would become *Bangladesh* for the next 200 years, let me not say forever!’ (Giannakou)

'[without the Troika]... today we would not just become *Argentina*, but we'd be *Senegal*!' (Matsaganis)

'[without the Troika]... with the alternative of *Argentina*, half the city of Athens would have been burnt by now...' (Mandravelis)

'If we disengage from Europe, the danger of becoming a *sub-Saharan African country* is very big...' (Ramfos)

As shown, the objects of 'Europe' and the 'Troika' are heavily invested with representations of safety and security, while the alternatives are considered disastrous and worrisome. The alternatives are anchored on prior historical examples of countries that have experienced bankruptcy, i.e. Argentina, or are simply seen as poor, i.e. Senegal or Bangladesh. Interestingly, the wider Balkans, which are situated within Europe and are the immediate geographical context of Greece, were said to be thought of as 'less European' or 'non-European', thus less prototypical compared to Western/Northern Europe, creating a hierarchy of Europeanness. For instance, some commented that:

'Think about it, the Bulgarian is a European citizen, and so is the German. But they are not treated the same when they come to work in Greece. Therefore, we don't have a common identity, although we should' (Lyritzis)

'For the Greeks, Europe starts from Italy... this is how the Greek understands it, he doesn't see Bulgaria as Europe, he considers it Balkan, which is interesting, because he doesn't quite think of the Balkans as Europe, but something in-between...' (Tsoukalis)

Furthermore, the 'Balkans' seemed to inspire the same fears as countries of the Global South did in the previous examples. Historian Despoina Papadimitriou, for instance, admitted that:

'me too, as a citizen, I share this agony... [...] maybe there is this fear in many of us, that in terms of living standards we'll resemble more our neighbouring Balkan countries, that got to know the communist experience, i.e. Bulgaria, Rumania, Albania, and potentially this fear regarding wages, healthcare, corruption, all the problems of post-communist transitions, we will now have to deal with, and beyond the left/right divisions, or who we may have been, or whether we wanted this [Eastern/communist] experience or not, we've known mostly the western experience, the western bloc, and now we have to deal with [this]...'

As such, Greece's becoming was anchored on prior historical examples of other nations' difficult times and created a base for 'feared possible selves', which departed from the prototypes of the European 'desired possible selves' (Barone *et al.*, 1997).

National dissensus and personal experiences

Moving on from these geo-schematic narratives, the next dominant representation in the interviews in terms of identity conflict was that of 'lack of national consensus', whereby Greece was presented as a 'divided nation', both before and after the economic crisis. Many spoke of a political system where 'the government says one thing, the opposition says another' (Repousi), the citizens resist 'cooperation and understanding' (Giannakou), therefore 'consensus from below' is missing, leading to 'social explosions' (Panousis), and a wider culture where 'the Greek cannot communicate with the Greek' (Mavrotas) in a climate of 'too much division' and polarisation between 'good and evil' (Ramfos). Within the context of the economic crisis, Triantafyllou summarises the climate as follows:

'a low tension civil war is going on. In Greece, we have a long Marxian tradition of class struggle, of holy battles against the bourgeoisie and the "damned" Right as most Greek leftists call the conservatives. However, the situation is more complex than a Marxian class struggle: social classes are not what they used to be[...] The Greek Left is conformist and vociferous; its models are Third World countries, it is anti-Western by definition. So we are all trying to come up for air in an atmosphere of intolerance and hatred. Fringe politics is on the rise both on the Right... and the Left... There is little room for moderates in Greece today' (Triantafyllou)

Many explain that the national division is obstructing the country's passage from 'crisis politics' to 'normal politics' because of the inability to agree on crisis policies, whether austerity options or Grexit itself (Koutsiaras, Ramfos, Trimis,). Others compare Greece to Germany and argue that Greece does not have the same consensus-driven political culture as Germany, a lack that is evaluated as a shortcoming for national policy planning and implementation (Andronopoulos, Chryssochoou). Few participants mentioned that governmental policies of unequal and unfair

distribution of taxation and cuts between public and private sector employees turn the two socio-economic groups against each other (Litsis, Ramfos).

Some participants argued that within the crisis there are two opposing social tendencies between those citizens who engage in national self-reflection and self-criticism and understand that the political system of the past needs to be discarded and changed, and those who do not look at their society critically and fail to understand the necessity of change.

‘there are strata of the population that have started thinking differently... these can take us out of the crisis... simultaneously, there are all of those who express the old Greece... those forces that try to stop that change... try to turn us back to how we used to be before the crisis, take us out of the requirements of development and progress, so they can serve... their sponsored lives’ (Ramfos)

‘it is obvious that the crisis had led parts of the society to... national self-awareness, that is, parts that understand what’s going on... assign political accountabilities and reposition themselves... politically. But there are big parts of the society that refuse to see the new situation, seek exit from the crisis with models of the past... this is a bet... regarding where the country will go, but both phenomena are very intense right now...’ (Lyritzis)

As is apparent in these quotations, participants diagnosed a national struggle between these two segments of society of reflective and non-reflective citizens. Within this representation of social opposition, the ‘old Greece’ is represented by practices of clientelism and blindness to its own flaws, while the ‘new Greece’ is characterised by self-knowledge and desire for change. Furthermore, Greece is once again represented as floating between two forces as a vacillating borderline possible self.

Interestingly, social oppositions became most vividly apparent in the interviewees’ descriptions of personal feelings and experiences. On the side of self-proclaimed Europeanists and ideational leaders who stated that they felt European, a MP asserted,

‘Sometimes because I feel European, I feel lonely in my country... I’m surprised how lonely I feel in the Greek Parliament, you know the stereotype that when we were building the Parthenon, the rest of the world was living on trees, the typical... which, as you know, is

ahistorical, but if you say so, you are a national traitor... or if you say something in favour of Europe and against your country... by saying the truth, you become a traitor' (Repousi)

This example echoes that of the Greek farmer of the previous chapter who felt similarly discriminated when called 'Germanotsolias' for wanting to vote YES in the 2015 Referendum and amply exemplifies the polarised conflict of everyday political life in Greece during the economic crisis. Another ideational leader felt the need to address his fellow citizens, saying that:

'I feel European, and I would like to plea to my fellow citizens to allow me to continue to feel European, since many would like to see us dispatch from Europe' (Sotiropoulos)

As shown, some participants experience cognitive dissonance within their professional or social environments and feel either obstructed in their political desires, i.e. to continue being European, or feel stereotyped by colleagues, i.e. being a 'traitor'. On the side of participants who were more critically inclined towards the EU, there were comparable complaints. For example:

'of course I am in favour of reforms, and revolutions too! I think this has falsely been established, on the one side, the reformist with the European face, and on the other side, the blood-covered supporter of North Korea, these are not serious distinctions... to put it simply, they accuse you that you don't support the reforms, that is, the Troika's policy, therefore you are a supporter of Albania, or North Korea... and the minute you propose a measure of direct democracy or economic protection for the vulnerable... you are accused of right-wing turn! By the same people who blamed you for being the supporter of totalitarian North Korea... it is paranoid' (Trimis)

'in the nineties, if you expressed an opinion against the Euro, you'd be categorised - unless you were already within the traditional Left - as the headstuck traditional leftist, who fell from planet Mars, and this was happening even in 2010, 2011... I was just a journalist interviewing economists who doubted that we should stay in the Euro, I wasn't [myself]... at work, this was seen with suspicion, almost like a crime...' (Litsis)

As shown, these participants felt similarly stereotyped by others, as 'radicals' or 'irrationally' critical of European integration. These divisions between assumed and mutually stereotyped 'Europeanists' and 'Eurosceptics' were additionally evident during brief discussions after the end of the interviews, when the researcher would ask participants for suggestions of key figures in the field that could be approached for interviewing. These findings will be presented here anonymously due to the 'off-the-

record' character of the data and thus, the sensitive and ethical issues that are invoked. In this respect, few participants expressed stereotyping notions towards other colleagues. For example, one participant questioned, 'who could you possibly talk to from the other side? They are all *karagkiozides* (clowns)', referring to individuals who have Eurosceptic views and support Grexit. Another commented that 'if you look at the candidates of SYRIZA, it is full of Greek academics and they are acting out like teenagers, they've gone wild!'. In these examples, Euroscepticism and critique towards the EU or the Euro currency are seen as less than serious or childish.

Alternatively, another participant asserted that those who think that Greece is not a 'normal country' by European standards suffer from 'small-town mentality' and are 'people who don't even know who Ken Loach is'. In this example, a critical response is projected that strategically attempts to diminish the cultural capital of those deemed as ideological opponents. This type of comments punctuated the existence of mutually articulated stereotyping tendencies between 'Eurosceptics' and 'Euroenthusiasts' and further reaffirmed the existence of a symbolic conflict within Greek society.

However, the most interesting identity conflicts that became evident during 'off-the-record' discussions with ideational leaders were not the ones between individuals and social groups, but *within* single individuals themselves. In some interactions, few participants who clearly held Europeanist views admitted to feeling conflicted during the crisis. Two participants said that even though they knew so much about Europe and always supported it, they felt Eurosceptic thoughts going through their minds when they watched the Troika on Greek television. Another EU supporter commented with reference to a 'Eurosceptic' colleague that 'he has arguments, you know, sometimes I'm afraid that he might be right'. These self-doubting moments regarding one's personal political choices illustrated the contested and shaken character of EU support within the political hearts of individuals, or otherwise, the conflict within.

European divisions and exclusions

At the European level, the predominant representation of identity conflict appeared to be that between North and South. A majority of participants referred to it as a European division, accompanied by mutual stereotyping that included hostility and conjoint devaluation. The division was often labelled in alternative ways, which punctuated the cognitive associations made with the respective schemas of 'North' and 'South', such as the 'export/producer countries and the import/buyer countries' (Repousi), the 'surplus and the deficit countries' (Mavrotas), 'creditors and debtors' (Mitsotakis), 'the rich and the poor' (Papadimitriou), the 'protestants and the lazy' (Mandravelis), and the 'economic burden and the austerity countries' (Pagoulatos). Several interviewees referred to 'anti-Germanism' becoming a feature of Greek European identity during the crisis, replacing 'traditional Greek anti-Americanism' (sic) (Chountis, Litsis). This identity change was located within what was described as Greek public opinion's engagement in 'politics of blaming' against Germany and formation of negative views. These dynamics can be understood as representations of Greece's European identity conflict.

In terms of exclusion, the representation of Greece as being constructed as non-European during the economic crisis was not explicitly or extensively discussed by this study's ideational leaders. Only one journalist mentioned that Greek identity is experienced as 'an exclusion from European identity' with reference to how Greeks see themselves during the crisis (Kimpouropoulos). However, some participants commented on the question of the European prototype and their comments implied a sense of exclusion from this prototype, as well as a preoccupation with what was perceived as a problematic narrowing or Germanification of European prototypicality. For example, Kampagiannis argued the following regarding the discourse of modernisation as Europeanisation.

'this narrative [of failed modernisation] exists in the whole of Europe, not just here, for sure around all the Southern countries, because they have particularities... but if you exclude them, what remains from Europe? If you exclude Greece, Spain, Italy... who are not European enough... you're left with Germany and France, but neither France is European enough, the discussion is similar there too, that France refuses to modernise,

because it has too many leftists and unions, etc., so France is to blame too, so what remains? Germany!’ (Kampagiannis)

As seen in this example, it is argued that the quest for the ‘perfect’ European prototype holds the danger of becoming elusive for most EU member-states, while it is implied that the standard of judgement and evaluation is set up by Germany. At another instance, MP Apostolos Kaklamanis commented that the ‘mould of the European’ is not owned by anyone in Europe and that if some nations think that other nations are ‘more backwards’, this needs to be reconsidered in the wider synthesis of European nations. These comments on European prototypicality might be understood as preoccupations with exclusion, mainly on the basis of comparison to countries that are categorised as ‘more modern and advanced’, and the association of this contrast to specific national objects, i.e. ‘Germany’.

Finally, the data revealed another identity conflict which was objectified around the relational aspect of identity and concerned what was described by participants as a ‘superiority/inferiority complex’ (Matsaganis), or as our analytical framework would dictate, a devaluation/overvaluation vacillation. As Pappas summarised it, ‘Greece’ always viewed ‘foreigners’ in a double way: either by worshiping and imitating anything foreign, or by thinking that Greece is a ‘chosen nation’. The result of this schism, as put by Pappas, was a ‘combination that produced monsters, sometimes a submissive slave-like approach to foreigners, and sometimes a self-centred conspiracy-driven one’. This vacillation appeared to be relevant to Greece’s relation with the EU, with the latter being seen through a so-called ‘milking cow versus bamboulas’²⁴ public perception (Mavrotas), extending after the economic crisis to the EU being seen as either a ‘saviour’ or an ‘oppressor’ (Panousis). These representations, which can be said to constitute continuations of the representations of a ‘love/hate’ historical relationship of Greece with the West, will be analysed next.

²⁴ The word ‘bamboulas’ (mpampoulas) is often used in Greek to connote someone who is scary, i.e. the ‘boogie man’, or something that is scary, i.e. a ‘monster’. The etymological origin of the word might be situated in the African drum and dance called ‘bamboula’ and the outdated stereotype of African tribes as ‘cannibals’ and African dances as ‘cannibalistic rituals’ or ‘voodoo ceremonies and incantations’ (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>).

Identity devaluation: negotiations of collective responsibility and exceptionalism

In the previous chapters, it was demonstrated that historiographical representations portrayed Greece as a 'lesser European' due to its Oriental identity, while various historical stereotypes included Greece being seen as over-ambitious, spoiled and wayward, amounting to representations of undeservingness. Within crisis representations, Greece was described by various negative metaphors, such as diseased, beggar or childish, while going through processes of culturalisation, moralisation and exceptionalisation, resulting to a status of 'internal otherness' within the EU. Within our ideational leaders' interviews, it was largely accepted that Greece had been stereotyped, therefore the idea that the economic crisis had constituted an identity threat was not contradicted. Responses to stereotyping included two main patterns, one that emphasised that Greece is responsible for its economic downfall and one that argued that Greece was strategically framed in stereotypical ways. Nevertheless, these two camps did not share uniformly separate representations and there were several arguments that were shared by both, a facet of the data that indicated the complexity of expert opinion. The concept of 'collective responsibility' appeared to be a dominant one, whether this was expressed explicitly or implicitly, while questions of Greek exceptionalism were negotiated variably across the participants.

Reflections on negative stereotypes

In terms of identity threat as devaluation, several participants commented that Greece passed quickly and suddenly from an 'era of Eudaimonia'²⁵ or 'euphoria' to conditions of 'decadence', 'shame' and 'failure' (Mavrotas, Papadimitriou, Papakonstantinou). Moreover, many observed that the economic crisis had led to lowered national 'self-esteem', 'confidence' and 'pride'

²⁵ Eudaimonia (eu = good + daimon = spirit) translates as 'the state of having a good indwelling spirit, a good genius' (Encyclopaedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/eudaemonism#ref273308>). More widely, it is seen as 'a contented state of being happy and healthy and prosperous' (Dictionary.com).

(Kimpouropoulos, Pagoulatos, Smyrlis). Kazakis went as far as stating that 'the Greek is the European with the lowest self-esteem'. In terms of responses to stereotypes, the majority agreed that there had been stereotypes about Greece during the economic crisis and did not reject their existence.

There were two distinct responses to stereotypes. The first emphasised Greece's culpability within the crisis and the second argued that Greece's stereotyping was strategic and deliberate. It appeared that the first camp was predominantly populated by academics and members of moderate political parties from the centre of the political spectrum who supported European integration, while the second included journalists and party representatives of the radical and fringe left-wing parties who were more sceptical towards European integration. Nevertheless, this was not an absolute separation and several common discursive subthemes existed in both groups' representations. Although these group distinctions may be attributed to the effects of snowballing sampling, they may indicate professional or ideological leanings. However, given the small sample and qualitative nature of the research, such generalisations should not be made.

Beginning with the first group, participants downplayed the importance of stereotypes and attempted to refocus the discussion at the national level. For example, respondents commented the following regarding stereotypes of laziness and profligacy.

'no, I don't think that one should stay [there], there is a huge problem in our culture... over the centuries, human action and initiative were associated with sin, and salvation was associated with holy grace, which devalued our relation with action and facilitated an attitude that looked for easy solutions, like loans... [this] didn't facilitate the organisation of labour... and willingness for labour. We love miracle solutions more than we love solutions of agency, which is why it was always, and still is, easier to find conspirators than to look at ourselves' (Ramfos)

'Many Greeks have started asking long forgotten questions: who are we?... What's our position in Europe...? What's happened to us and why? Is there some truth in the stereotypes against us?... Are we really lazybones and thriftless? ... the recession can, and must, help us acquire some self-knowledge which, I think, is sadly lacking. We are awfully narcissistic: our nationalism and parochialism are proverbial. We - the political authorities and each one of us - have mismanaged our finances and our lives: we should agree on this. Instead of self-doubt and criticism, we always blame others: once upon a time the USA and the NATO, now the EU, the wicked, stingy and Protestant Germans, the corrupted local politicians. Whom we elected time and again' (Triantafyllou)

As becomes apparent, this line of argumentation emphasises the need for Greek society to engage in a process of national self-reflection and acceptance of Greek responsibilities, while a major assumption is that Greek citizens blame others for the economic crisis, i.e. the EU or Germany, therefore fail to acknowledge their own accountability. This assumed construction of ‘conspirators’ and ‘parochial narcissism’ of Greek society can be understood as self-esteem mechanisms that seek to rebalance the threat posed by an identity devaluation by means of dispensing responsibility and blame-shifting to external objects. Within these representations there is an implicit acceptance of stereotypes as justifiable. Yannis Panousis, at the time MP with DIMAR, commented that the ‘foreigners’ ask for ‘specifics’ and ‘rule-following’ from ‘us’ and ‘we’ don’t deliver them, which justifies exasperated European reactions. Kaklamanis observed that although European stereotypes of Greeks are ‘exaggerated’, it is easy to forget that they might be ‘justified’.

Moreover, as indicated above, there was emphasis on the mutuality of stereotyping, with participants arguing that many Greeks themselves created several negative stereotypes of other Europeans, i.e. Northerners or Germans (also, Kaklamanis, Litsis, Tsoukalis). This was a dominant feature in this group of participants, but not solely, possibly as a strategy of relocating the problematisation within the national context and Greece’s own responsibilities and symbolic wrong-doings during the crisis.

‘us too, when we talk about the evil Germans, the cold Northerners, the anthellenic English, we should be very careful, just like we want others to be careful towards us’ (Kratsa)

Nevertheless, within the wider representation of acceptance of Greek culpability, there were various critical counter-arguments and negotiations. For instance, representatives from the ND party felt that despite their acceptance of Greek flaws, they disagreed with the ways some stereotypes were expressed.

‘we can’t say that Greeks are lazy, but we can say that the main goal was to be employed in the public sector, which doesn’t happen in European countries... there was of course

corruption, and it still exists, and you should know that corruption exists in all the world and all over Europe, but there are some inviolable rules in European countries. In Greece, unfortunately, there was impunity...' (Giannakou)

'Many of the stereotypes that were attributed to the Greeks don't correspond to reality... we do have a big problem of corruption in Greece, bigger compared to the rest of Europe, [but] we are not a corrupted nation. There is an important difference between saying that we have a big issue and saying that we are a corrupted nation, which places all Greeks within a stereotype' (Mitsotakis)

As such, although these participants accepted that the Greek crisis had domestic roots, they were disagreeable with the wording of stereotypical claims and their overgeneralising or exceptionalising effects. Within an SIT framework these tactics can be understood as restorative of the threatened collective self-esteem by means of negotiating the nature or extend of the problem. Nevertheless, the comparisons made between Greece and other European countries that do not exhibit as much corruption as Greece does, can be said to still place Greece in an exceptional position.

Furthermore, it was evident that as much as some participants acknowledged Greek culpability as the primary cause of the Greek economic crisis and declared their support for the EU, or even described themselves as Europeans or Europeanists, this did not necessarily entail an absence of critique towards the EU. For example, some argued that there was mutual responsibility on behalf of the EU in the development of the economic crisis. For instance, some argued that the EU did not provide sufficient supervision of economic matters in the past, which resulted in allowing the crisis to happen.

'Greece's political *kakodaimonia* ²⁶ and the effects and political behaviour that it causes, seem to have been enabled by easy borrowing from Europe. It looks like the Greek political system, the Greek governments, acted like a moocher, a stowaway, while the inspector, the ticket collector, essentially let them unchecked, if not encouraged them in their freeloading...' (Koutsiaras)

'there's a whole story about the role of Eurostat. Ok, we ourselves were useless, but did they not see that all our numbers were flashing red? There is a serious problem of

²⁶ Kakodaimonia (kakos = evil + daimon = spirit) translates as the opposite of 'eudaimonia', therefore it stands for having a 'bad genius' or 'bad spirit'.

governance in the EU... of course, we are the last that can complain about this, but it is a serious issue from a European point of view... the economic governance, what existed before... the Commissioner scolding countries that had large deficits, but with very little surveillance of one country by another, which would be logical in an economic union, but that didn't happen...' (Matsaganis)

In terms of the relationship between responsibility and identity, following SIT, this sharing of responsibility can be understood as a blame-shifting strategy that lifts full blaming, thus full identity devaluation, from one social entity by placing part of it on another.

Various other interviewees commented critically on the crisis management, saying that the EU was unprepared to deal with the economic crisis and that there was insufficient solidarity towards Greece at the beginning of the crisis (Chrysoschoou, Pagoulatos). The Troika was viewed negatively by some who claimed that the intervention was 'unplanned, violent, painful, and longer than necessary' (Sotiropoulos) and the Troika itself is 'not interested in the wellbeing of Greeks, they just want their money back, which is understandable, but is not part of the initial European vision' (Triantafyllou). It was also mentioned that the EU could play a role in repairing the damage caused by negative stereotypes, i.e. through youth exchange programmes, but was not taking a lead in this direction (Georgiadou). On some occasions, European governments were seen as responsible for encouraging the circulation of negative stereotypes towards Greeks (Chrysosgelos, Kratsa). In many respects, it was apparent that Europeanism among ideational leaders was of a critical nature with participants criticising the EU or other governments on multiple grounds, but simultaneously declaring their support for European integration. As Tsoukalis put it, 'I am proud to be a critical European'. Papadimitriou explained that 'although it doesn't fulfil the beautiful role of the Europe of the people, it is still a community that I want to belong to'. Consequently, there were several critical views among supporters of the EU, nevertheless none that would warrant a complete change of political heart.

As was explained, a second group of participants emphasised that stereotypes against Greece were created strategically and were suspicious towards them. These participants were more inclined to

use heavier terms to describe these stereotyping phenomena, such as ‘victimisation’ (Kampagiannis), ‘stigmatisation’ (Andronopoulos) and ‘demonisation’ (Litsis). This may be attributed to greater feelings of identity threat, perceived as stigma, or it may be attributed to a strategic choice to safeguard collective self-esteem by dispensing responsibility and enacting representations of others’ wrongdoings. These participants were also more predisposed to identify large structures as responsible for the crisis, i.e. world capitalism, neoliberalism or globalisation. One of the primary reasons that was perceived to be responsible for such deliberate stereotyping was the facilitation of reforms and acceptance of austerity measures. Some believed that negative stereotypes aimed at cultivating feelings of guilt among the Greek public that would result in diminished resistance towards Memorandum policies.

‘one of the reasons for the imposition of Memorandum policies in Greece was the claim that Greeks are a lazy nation, corrupted and profligate, this created a guilt syndrome...’
(Chountis)

‘...a strategy of incrimination of society, so that you can pass certain measures, to make society accept them, at which point we have an intervention in the development of social attitudes themselves’ (Andronopoulos)

Karathanasopoulos, MP with KKE, shared this view saying that if people think they partake in the responsibility of the corruption which led to the economic crisis, they will not fight for their rights and will endure all the consequences of austerity policies. Some interviewees held the belief that Greece was being ‘punished’, like a ‘bad child’ (Pappas) with a ‘teacher over its head’ (Chountis), and treated like a ‘guinea pig’ in order to set ‘an example’ for other countries who might wish to resist austerity policies (Andronopoulos, Trimis). As it appears, this group of participants, characterised by more polemical representations compared to the previous one, and populated by journalists and left-wing party members, made extensive use of the media metaphors that were identified in the international press in the previous chapter. However, these were not accepted by everybody, as Karathanasopoulos stated that his party disagrees with the guinea pig metaphor of Greece, because Greece is the last to implement neoliberal reforms which contradicts the guinea pig narrative.

Participants identified various strategic actors at various registers: a) the personal, b) the national, c) the European level, and d) the ideological. At the personal level, there was a process of personification that concerned George Papandreou, the Prime Minister during the beginning of the crisis in late 2009, who was viewed as responsible for conveying to the international community an image of Greece as lazy and corrupted (Papakonstantinou). This criticism was also projected by some of the more moderate and Euro-supportive participants. Papadimitriou, for instance, contested that 'Papandreou's initiatives... gave the impression of a society that is rotten, which might be right to some part, but this is not something that one can claim and support as a leader of a nation-state'. Others also spoke of Greek 'leadership' or 'ruling elites' endorsing and becoming comfortable with these negative representations (Mavrotas, Pappas).

Greek political elites were seen as enacting a double domestic campaign that placed blame on both Greek citizens and the EU, simultaneously (Kampagiannis, Pappas). For instance, Kampagianis argued that during the crisis it was 'easier' for Greek governments to implement reforms blaming 'outer forces' like the EU, an idea that was not contradicted by a representative of the ruling ND of the time of data collection, who argued that the Troika was 'necessary, to share the political cost' (Smyrlis). European governments and media were criticised for permitting and even promoting negative stereotypes (Kazakis, Kimpouropoulos). Finally, some participants mentioned the dominance of neoliberal economic ideology and what they viewed as neoliberalism's negative effects on people's lives (Andronopoulos, Mandravelis). Strategic stereotyping was seen as obscuring the responsibilities of European actors, i.e. the EU and Germany, or international ones, i.e. the banks and the market (Litsis, Trimis). For example, the EU was blamed for the inefficiencies of the Eurozone, for permitting excessive lending and providing insufficient economic supervision (Kazakis, Litsis, Pappas).

Germany appeared to be a particular object at the national level. The German government and press were specifically identified as responsible for such stereotyping by some participants (Kazakis, Litsis). As a response, some insisted that Germany has its own corruption, i.e. being involved in

multinational company scandals, others argued that German export surpluses 'presupposed a profligate South', therefore contributed to the economic crisis (Kimpouropoulos), while some viewed German foreign policy as overtly ideological and attached to its own protestant values (Andronopoulos, Pappas). Critiques of Germany were not only present in this group. For instance, former MEP Rodi Kratsa stated that 'one would expect more from a leading country like Germany'. Some went as far as saying that the stereotyping of Greeks by Germans was similar to that of the Jews during the thirties (Andronopoulos). Kazakis, leader of EPAM and proponent of Grexit, shared the following thoughts and personal experiences regarding this metaphor of 'Greeks as Jews'.

'I think there was a systematic propaganda, which I personally witnessed every time I travelled abroad during these years, primarily against the Greeks, but also all the Southerners, where the governments were trying to cover up their responsibilities, as well as those of this formation called Eurozone, and as an extension, of the EU, they tried to teach their people to judge with terms of collective responsibility. Greece has corrupted politicians? Therefore, it's the Greek's fault because he is corrupted. With this logic of collective responsibility, we are back in the times of Nazism, where it was believed that the Jew was responsible for the economic crisis of Germany in the interwar... in the same way, just like the Jew was subjected to propaganda, I too faced the propaganda against the Greeks, especially during the first two or three years, in Germany itself, yes, yes, yes, every time I was there...' (Kazakis)

As illustrated, stereotypical identities of 'Germans as Nazis' were reproduced here, through the metaphor of 'Greeks as Jews' and anchoring of the Eurozone crisis to the economic crisis of the interwar years, while stereotyping against Greeks was viewed as highly deliberate and malevolent. The journalist Moysis Litsis explained that he felt particularly annoyed when a British taxi driver told him that 'you Greeks don't want to pay any taxes at all', a comment that can be said to echo the aforementioned comment by Christine Lagarde in chapter four regarding Greeks evading taxes 'all the time'. The participant further added that these stereotypes are 'dangerous' and 'breed racism', maintaining that Greece is responsible for such stereotypes too by 'dishonouring the history of WWII' when representing Merkel as a Nazi officer (Litsis).

There was comparable evidence in accounts of self-proclaimed Europeanists who appeared to have been personally affected, albeit not to the same degree, by what Mandravelis called the 'war of

stereotypes' between Greeks and Germans. Repousi, for instance, expressed the awkwardness of 'being Greek' and 'visiting Germany' during the crisis for a research seminar.

'I remember it was during the beginning of the crisis, when the German press was full of articles about the downfall of the Greeks, every single day... I went there and during the duration of my trip I was thinking about how the Germans might see me... the first day no one said anything to me... during the evening, when we went out for dinner and a glass of wine, I was so impressed with what sympathy they opened the discussion about Greece, to such a degree, that I was truly surprised that these people had not been influenced by the negative images of the Greeks that circulated daily in the German press... however, I must note here that these were not ordinary Germans, they were educated and taught at the university, predominantly social democrats, because political opinion matters too, and understand that Germany's policy could lead to a breakup of Europe, and being profoundly Europeanists, they react to this policy. This was a very positive experience.'

As seen, experiences were not reported to be only negative, although we can still identify their impact not only in the awkward preoccupation of how others will see one's identity due to a collective identity characteristic, but also in the assertion that the individuals of this story were 'special Germans' based on their education, profession, and political ideology. Education appeared to be a key factor in Kazakis's negative experience when he reflected that it is not the German peoples' fault if they think in stereotypical ways, because news are communicated through newspapers like *Build*, a type of publication that in his view contributes to the 'degradation of education across Europe'. As such, we can appreciate that ideational leaders negotiated these identity threats emanating from stereotypes in varying ways, making various balancing arguments, differentiations and specifications.

Collective responsibility and other demons

In any case, Kazakis's extended quotation above explicitly brings to the fore one of the main preoccupations within the data, namely, that of collective responsibility. This question of Greek culpability was implicit or paraphrased repeatedly during the interviews, as was demonstrated by the first group of participants who emphasised Greece's responsibility for its economic crisis. As previously seen, Triantafyllou stated 'we - the political authorities and each one of us - have

mismanaged our finances' which can be interpreted as a statement that hinges on the notion of collective responsibility. Ramfos was one of the few to refer to it explicitly, commenting that, given what he saw as weaknesses of Greek identity, 'it is characteristic that during this critical period very few had the sense of responsibility, very few said that the responsibility is collective, some more responsible, some less, but there is a collective responsibility'.

However, it did not follow that all individuals who accepted Greek culpability necessarily accepted that responsibility was collective. Giannakou, for instance, who described crisis causes as solely domestic (i.e. lack of productive base, limited tax revenue and tax evasion, lack of sense of responsibility, public demands for public expenses), commented the following:

'in order for a nation to do well, there needs to be a sense of individual responsibility, which transforms into collective action, this needs self-discipline... [here] there is no discipline. We used to hear theories, from politicians too, that there is such a thing as collective responsibility, I'm telling you that not even in the Nuremberg Trials was collective responsibility recognised, there is no collective responsibility, responsibility is personal' (Giannakou)

The choice of example here, i.e. Nuremberg Trials, may be read as an implicit juxtaposition of collective responsibilities, namely war crimes and debt/bankruptcy, perhaps aiming at minimising the responsibility of the latter by means of strategic comparison between what nevertheless needs to be understood as radically dissimilar historical circumstances. Nevertheless, as indicated, the interviews revealed that there were not only varied degrees of acceptance of responsibility, but also competing representations of responsibility, ranging from the 'personal' to the 'collective' and the 'shared/mutual' type of responsibility with the EU or with 'surplus countries'.

An important point to convey is that although it could be assumed that there was a distinct dissonance between participants that insisted on domestic representations of the crisis and variably endorsed negative self-stereotypes of Greeks, and those who viewed them as strategic propaganda and stretched the importance of various large structures, i.e. the Eurozone or global capitalism, it would be misleading to do so. Endorsing Greek culpability, and stereotypes derived from it, was not

mutually exclusive to criticising extra-national structures, including the EU. Similarly, projecting polemical responses to claims of Greek responsibility, and stereotypes associated with it, did not exclude accepting Greek responsibility and political or financial ‘peculiarities’ or ‘pathologies’ (Kampagiannis, Papakonstantinou) as primary causes for the crisis. For example, although Kazakis rejected the notion of collective responsibility, he stated that ‘Greece has the most corrupted political system in Europe’.

However, this comment appeared to be part of criticising Greek political elites, rather than the whole of Greek society, enacting the populist representation that separates ‘the elites’ from ‘the people’. As stated by Kazakis at another point, there is nothing that can be salvaged from the old corrupted system, ‘except the people’. This distinction appeared to be an important feature in the ways participants negotiated collective responsibility and blame attribution between those who were, as Ramfos put it above, ‘more responsible, or less responsible’. In this respect, some participants made differentiations between elites and citizens, attributing greater responsibility to the first.

‘the citizens have a two-way relationship with the political leadership, they feed each other, the citizen votes to enjoy what is promised by [the politicians]... there is a responsibility, which is related to the political system, for the society that accepted this model... because it was convenient... on many occasions, tax evasion was convenient, relations to the parties were convenient... however, the political powers of the last thirty years never explained, or if they did, they weren’t heard, neither the model, its problems or their size, nor were there any policies for the management of these problems... so, the citizen has some responsibility, within a wider context of permissiveness, everybody was doing whatever they wanted without control from anybody, but the central role and main responsibility is with the political authorities, the power, every time...’ (Lyritzis)

‘[the political elites] have a large part of responsibility, the parties that ruled the last thirty-four years... because they could see the ship heading towards the iceberg and although there were some voices that gave warnings... they did nothing to turn the wheel, they just threw the hot potato to each other, and pushed problems under the rug, and thought that all that mattered was that the potato didn’t burst during their own office...’ (Mavrotas)

As illustrated, the ruling parties of the *Metapolitefsi*²⁷ era of the last thirty-four years were categorised as the main culprits, which includes the PASOK and ND parties. Although political elites were primarily blamed for economic mismanagement, citizens were seen as sharing this responsibility by means of their voting participation and cooperation with the clientelistic and tax-evading system. The same was argued by two representatives of the ND who argued that citizens understand their responsibilities.

‘one tendency is that in a large part of the population, we recognised mistakes... many times we heard the phrase ‘but aren’t we to blame at all? Let’s think about our own mistakes, it is the political system’s fault, yes, but don’t we elect this system? Yes, don’t we want to get comfortable in the public sector? Didn’t we not learn to live with a system that was unproductive...?’ many times there was a sense of self-awareness and apology by the citizens...’ (Kratsa)

‘the Greek decided that it is his fault too, not in the sense as said by Mr. Pangalos [that] ‘we ate it together’, but in the sense that ‘even when I saw you eating it, I didn’t react, I didn’t do anything’, so now, [the Greek] says that he should make his sacrifices...’ (Smyrlis)

The last quotation refers to Theodoros Pangalos’s well-known statement ‘we ate it together’ (Μαζί τα φάγαμε), which was provided by the PASOK politician as an answer to the public questioning regarding the ways public funds were spent. At the beginning of the economic crisis, various Greek citizens wondered how public funds were spent by the ruling parties as to lead to state bankruptcy and Pangalos famously declared that the money was gone, because his party had hired citizens in the public sector. Pangalos received widespread criticism for this statement on the basis of equating the degrees of responsibility between ruling elites and citizens. Within the interviews, Karathanasopoulos, contested this logic saying that ‘when someone eats all the bread, and another only eats the breadcrumbs, they do not share the same responsibility’. In any case, Smyrlis’s quotation additionally highlights the question of ‘bystander’s responsibility’ when saying that people did not react or do anything to stop politicians from appropriating public funds for their personal and party interests, which adds another version of responsibility.

²⁷ Metapolitefsi, meaning ‘regime change’, is the historical period in Greece following the end of the dictatorship in 1974.

Negotiations of national exceptionalism

Beyond the question of responsibility, in all its forms, the question of Greek exceptionalism was discussed with the participants. The interviews revealed that most participants problematised the notion of Greece's exceptionality and shared a variety of arguments. Several interviewees maintained that Greece was not exceptional in general or in the Euro crisis, either because 'all countries are special cases' in general (Mandravelis, Panousis, Tsoukalis) or because 'no country is special' as such (Georgiadou, Papadimitriou). Some contested Greek exceptionality particularly 'within the EU' which they viewed as 'full of special cases' and as having failed to deliver 'real convergence' (Papakonstantinou, Kimpouropoulos). Some supported that Greece was possibly an 'extreme case' instead of an 'exceptional case' (Pagoulatos, Triantafyllou, Tsoukalis). Others supported that since various other countries had economic problems, it was evident that Greece's issues were not unique (Lyritzis, Repousi, Tsoukalis). However, Sotiropoulos disagreed with this view saying that Greece was the 'only case' where there was collapse, which situates it within a representation of exceptionality.

Nevertheless, many participants accepted that Greece had various peculiarities, which included its clientelistic system (Pappas, Ramfos, Repousi), analogy of debt and deficits (Mavrotas, Papakonstantinou), limited productivity and investments (Pappas), variety of capitalism (Chountis, Pappas), tax evasion (Chountis), social policies and delays of reforms (Chountis), corruption and permissiveness (Giannakou), financial mismanagement (Smyrlis), security issues and extensive sea borders (Panousis), and way of entering the Eurozone, based only on political criteria (Litsis). Some situated representations of Greek exceptionalism within the wider stream of strategic stereotyping during the economic crisis (Lyritzis, Mandravelis, Trimis, Kampagiannis). Finally, Panousis commented that it is not helpful to think of Greece as 'special' and that sometimes it might be

Greeks themselves who promote this representation as an 'alibi' for 'failing to progress'. As such, projecting negative exceptionalism was understood in this case as an excuse for inability.

Identity overvaluation: 'chosen peoples' and 'heroic victims'

In chapter three it was discussed that Greece was overvalued during its history for being presented as the 'cradle of civilisation' and 'seedbed of democracy' through the processes of Hellenism and Philhellenism. In chapter four, it was explained that in light of negative representations of Greece during the crisis, the country was additionally represented in positive stereotypes, such as that of the 'victim' of the economic crisis and of its management, the 'rebel' against the EU, world capitalism or neoliberalism, the 'regime changer' that would deliver democracy or nationalism, and finally, the 'underdog' that fights against odds. Within our ideational leaders' interviews, explicit overvaluing strategies were rather scarce and only very few participants engaged in such representations. There were, however, several assumptions and criticisms of Greek society as one that believes in the superiority of the Greek nation as a kind of 'chosen people' (περιούσιος λαός). Furthermore, we can argue that projections of negative stereotyping as strategic and deliberate represent Greece as a 'victim' and an 'underdog' and constructs positive identity stereotypes. Representations of Greece as a 'rebel' or 'regime changer' were present, but ultimately quite marginal. All these representations can be understood as defence mechanisms of a perceived as devalued social identity, albeit used in a limited extent. The remaining section will elaborate on these themes.

Some overvaluing strategies: the stuff myths are made of

Beginning with overvaluing strategies, there were only few occasions where participants projected arguments of Greek superiority. Nevertheless, the few that were observable occurred during discussions of negative stereotyping and Greek exceptionalism. Based on SIT, this indicates that

overvaluing tactics are used as a counter-balancing act in the service of group self-esteem by means of identity re-evaluation and management of the inflicted identity threat that derives from negative stereotyping and exceptionalisation. The tactics that were observed in the data included claiming that a) Greece is superior to other Balkan countries, b) Greece is indeed special, but in positive ways, c) Greeks are admired by foreigners because they have innate positive characteristics, and d) Greece has a characteristic that is 'the best in the world'. As becomes apparent, and as SIT proclaims, positive distinctiveness is claimed by means of group comparison and identity is enacted relationally. The above tactics can be labelled a) hierarchisation, b) positive exceptionalisation, c) relational narcissism, and d) antagonistic narcissism. All strategies can be understood within the wider context of *mythologisation* of national identity and motives of defensive nationalism.

In the first instance, it was claimed that Greece is superior among Balkan countries, which reaffirmed empirically the claims made in the previous section by other participants who thought that Greeks may not always view the Balkans as fully European. For example, during a discussion about Greek exceptionalism and after accepting that Greece had several specifically Greek social and economic problems, a participant explained that rule-following is not followed in Greece as it is followed in 'the rest of Europe' and moved on to clarify that:

'when I say the rest of Europe, I mean the old countries of the EU, because this is where we belong, I can't compare Greece with Albania that just started the negotiations, or Serbia that wants to enter, or Croatia that entered yesterday, neither Bulgaria, nor Romania, because this comparison will only degrade my country, I can't compare with them, because I am a member since 1979 [sic]... so I had the time and the resources to compare to Italy, I wouldn't say Germany, but the other Southern countries, because we have common characteristics... and just for this, I can't accept that the Greek will have the same wages as the Bulgarian, Bulgaria entered the EU on different grounds' (Smyrlis)

As can be seen, this representation of Greek and other European identities implicitly creates a *hierarchisation of Europeanness*, on the basis of timeframe and conditions of EU accession. Interestingly, EU accession is presented as the measure of belongingness to Europe, while geo-schematic groupings of countries are hierarchised in 'degrees of Europeanness', with Germany at a

higher level, Greece placed at a middle ground with other Southern-Mediterranean member-states, although notably Croatia, an equally Southern-Mediterranean (but Balkan) country is not included in this grouping, and finally, at a lower level the Balkan countries, where Greece is said to not belong. This representation can also be said to be indicative of the superiority/inferiority complex as an overvaluation/devaluation vacillation across a constructed Europeanness spectrum, whereby Greece is presented as superior to the Balkans, but inferior to Germany.

Moving on, the tactic of *positive exceptionalisation* was used by the same participant as a response to Greece's negative exceptionalisation during the economic crisis.

'when Greece entered [the EC]... there was a distinct attitude... both [Europeans and Greeks] understood that the future of Europe and Greece was joint. We are talking about a completely different country, this is not a country that was admitted in the EU for its technology and industry... or agricultural production, but because of its civilisation, history and strategic location. These three things. This should not be forgotten, when we entered there were the rich countries and Greece. Why was there no other country admitted [like that]? Because there was none in that place' (Smyrlis)

As seen, Greek positive distinctiveness is associated here with the exclusively political criteria upon which Greece was admitted in the EC, rather than the fulfilment of economic criteria. This strategy attempts to achieve positive identity status by constructing positive representations of Greek uniqueness and indispensability of Greece for Europe. Furthermore, it attempts to transform a feature of weakness, i.e. bad economy, into a feature of strength, by replacing it with another, i.e. political indispensability. Few other participants also used this narrative emphasising that ancient Greece is 'a symbol for Europe' because the 'ancient Greek spirit... is the greatest strength of humanity', while Greece was 'the only country that was admitted to the EEC contributing less than it gained' (Giannakou). This narrative strategy can be understood as negotiating the devaluing effects produced by the chronic shortcomings of national economy by substituting them with overvaluing strategies of enhanced self-esteem on the basis of claims of historical uniqueness, universality, and European identity prototypicality. It should be noted that both these respondents belong to the ND

party which was the one to achieve EEC accession, hence party pride may be at work here, indicating group esteem at the party level.

However, most of the participants did not seek national distinction in the ancient Greek tradition and some argued that identity overvaluations based on this particular feature 'should not be emphasised' (Kaklamanis). Others even censored themselves, as in the case of MEP Chountis who critically commented on himself as 'playing smart' when talking to EU Commissioners about Greece's historical contribution (also, Karathanasopoulos). These can be understood as self-presentation tactics that try to avoid conveying the impression of nationalism or collective self-importance, but also as part of the recommended 'national self-reflection'. Furthermore, this attitude might also be attributed to the implicit belief projected by Matsaganis that the national features Greeks are usually proud of, i.e. cultural heritage and natural beauty, they 'never actually had to work for them'.

Moving on, attempts for positive group status were made within the third strategy of *relational narcissism*. For instance, responding to stereotypes of laziness, a respondent argued that:

'laziness was proven wrong, statistics[...] proved that we are much more hard-working than everybody. And we are the most productive... I remember, as an old economic correspondent, foreign investors who used to come to Greece and talked about the intelligence of the Greek worker, his adaptability, productiveness... we have very bad systems... when the Greek finds himself within good systems abroad, he excels...'
(Andronopoulos)

As illustrated, responses to stereotypes of laziness were answered with assertions of being the 'opposite of lazy', i.e. 'hard-working', accompanied by exaggerations of being 'more hard-working than everybody' else or 'the most productive'. Furthermore, positive characteristics were ascribed to Greek identity, i.e. intelligence and adaptability, as well as allusions to admiration by others. Both tactics are highly relational, since they include group comparison and validation by others. Simultaneously, they can be understood as forms of collective narcissism in the sense of claiming to be superior to 'everybody else' or being 'admirable' as such. The representation of statistics as a means of proof of Greek work ethic was also projected by several other participants who claimed

that Greece was strategically framed. Another representation that was projected as proof of Greek work ethic and further alleged positive Greek features was this differentiation between 'good and bad systems' and assumption of 'Greek excellence within good systems'.

This last assumption of 'indigenous charisma' and the role of '(dys)functional context' was encountered several times within the data and appeared to be one of the strongest national myths, namely, the 'diaspora myth'. This myth was always accompanied by the 'underdog narrative' of the talented, hard-working and driven, yet socially disadvantaged in Greece, Greek individual who emigrates and finds professional and social success in another country where the social context is more egalitarian, meritocratic, thus less corrupted and dysfunctional. This particular myth was frequently projected by several participants as an overvaluing strategy of 'Greekness' in the service of collective self-esteem, regardless of the imaginary or elitist features of the narrative. Papakonstantinou, for example, argued that Greeks have positive features like 'adaptability, open-mindedness and inventiveness', which is proven by the fact that 'all of you who study abroad and do well, but not so well in Greece'. Mavrotas agreed saying that when 'the Greek goes abroad, he shows his good face and succeeds because he is in a different environment' and added that Greeks leave their country, not because of economic reasons, but because of the lack of meritocracy, therefore the ones that are 'capable' and 'don't want to play the game of *rousfeti*'²⁸ and nepotism' necessarily depart, a representation which further attributes morally superior features to the imagined diasporic minority. Furthermore, this narrative appears to assume that other countries have idealised societies with no such social problems like nepotism and corruption.

The fourth self-enhancing strategy, *antagonistic narcissism*, concerned a more polemical collective narcissistic representation. Responding to stereotypes of profligacy, the same participant explained that the waste of EU funds by the Greek clientelistic system led to unproductive economic practices that left no structures behind with unfortunate results for Greek products.

²⁸ 'Rousfeti' is a political favour dispensed by an influential and powerful political figure to a citizen, which could be anything from a transfer, promotion, appointment or exemption.

‘it cannot be that the Greek olive oil which is the best in the world, and should be sold in perfume bottles, is bought by the Italian mafia to be mixed and raise the quality of [their oil]...’

In this strategy, it is supported that Greece has a feature that is the ‘best in the world’, i.e. olive oil, and is exploited by others, i.e. the oil being used for mixing and quality improvement. The olive oil is objectified as an iconic feature of national identity, while antagonistic relationships are assumed between Greece and Italy, within a framework of competition for quality. This strategy can additionally be understood as substituting the feelings of Greek lack of productive and commercial success with feelings of quality greatness and positive distinction, which aim to play a self-enhancing function for economic collective self-esteem. Finally, the conspirational elements of this narrative further seek to present Greece in positive terms by stressing desirability, assuming possession of that which is aimed to be taken, hence desired by others.

Criticising the ‘chosen people syndrome’ and conspiracy theories

Although some strategies of self-esteem enhancement were encountered, identity devaluation was a more prominent feature within the data compared to overvaluation patterns. Furthermore, several ideational leaders assumed that Greek society is prone to identity overvaluation and criticised it for believing that Greeks belong to a kind of ‘chosen people’ (Litsis, Pagoulatos, Panousis). The following extended quotation exemplifies many of these themes.

‘Our misery is that we have glorious ancestors... this has cultivated an attitude that the rest of the world owes us... and that we are supposed to live from this, that we’ve done enough, we don’t need to do anything else... it’s a kind of moral hazard... it’s difficult to become a normal country that lives of its own effort, its own failures and successes, we are the spoiled kids of history... we have a huge problem of national identity... the average Greek thinks that[...] Europeans live in grey cities and work all day, while we lay under the sun... and we attribute this to being so cool... you could go on for hours about this complex versions of this aggressive belief that we are the chosen people... all we achieved is ours, all hardships we’ve been through is somebody else’s fault... the national identity needs a lot of work...’ (Matsaganis)

As exemplified, identity overvaluation is seen as a significant feature of Greek society, while historical stereotypes of Greece as a 'spoiled child' are reproduced as solidified collective self-schemas. Furthermore, the narrative of the 'historical burden' of the 'glorious past' is another reproduction of past narratives that were discussed in previous chapters, although in this passage these are additionally associated with the crisis metaphor of 'moral hazard'. Group comparison between Greeks and Europeans reappears as a vehicle of identity formation that weighs towards the overvaluing side of the inferiority/superiority spectrum, in the service of collective self-esteem. Finally, blaming others and dispensing responsibility are seen as symptoms of the overvalued identity. As put, the overvalued national identity is 'an excuse for not assuming responsibility' (Ramfos).

Blaming others for one's misfortune was seen by many as a recurrent behavioural pattern of Greek society in the particular form of 'conspiracy theories' and was highly criticised (Kratsa, Mandravelis, Pagoulatos). Moreover, some implied that the belief in the 'chosen people' and the self-schema of the 'victim of conspiracies' were intimately related social attitudes, before and after the crisis.

'the crisis has produced a crisis of national confidence that empowers various negative stereotypes regarding the role of the Greeks, there is a retrogression between the syndrome of the chosen nation and the syndrome of the victimised nation... within the crisis this is intensified, you can see an inability to keep in touch with the European reality which has identity features' (Pagoulatos)

'there is a perception that we are a chosen people, others hate us, they are to blame for everything, they exploit us... a feeling of a chosen people... [people think] there is a crisis, but that's OK because God will protect us...' (Panousis)

Although the identity of the 'chosen' and that of the 'victim' may appear as antithetical at first, assuming that the latter belongs to another 'syndrome', they are better understood as belonging to the same area of identity overvaluation, not only because the 'victim' is socially associated with moral superiority and blissful irresponsibility, as explained in the previous chapter, but also because of its romanticising attributes. Simply put, the victimised identity functions as a self-valuing one

because the narcissist needs a 'villain', that is, a victimiser, in order to be a 'hero' within related narratives, such as the 'underdog' or the 'rebel'.

Positive crisis stereotypes: victims, rebels, game-changers, underdogs?

As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, positive stereotypes of Greece during the crisis included not only those of the 'victim', but also the 'rebel', the 'regime changer' and the 'underdog'. Within these ideational leaders' interviews, the most prominent positive representation was that of the victim, especially if the aforementioned representations of Greece as strategically framed in stereotypical ways are understood as a form of 'victimisation' and 'conspiracy theorising'. Some participants mentioned that Greece was not portrayed only in negative stereotypes during the crisis and that there were more positively inclined European responses, such as support and solidarity for the 'victims' of humanitarian crisis (Panousis, Repousi). However, some felt unconvinced by such supportive expressions.

'the foreigners see two things, all these about the thieves and the lazy, but now there is a wave of sympathy too, because they perceive the extremity [of budget cuts] and fear that it is coming for them too...' (Andronopoulos)

'we know that in the public opinion of other European countries stereotypes of lazy, profligate and corrupted Greeks are well-established, accompanied by pseudo-scientific arguments regarding the idiosyncrasy of the Southerners and their 'limitations', which lately are accompanied by expressions of 'pity' and 'compassion' for the 'sacrifices of the Greek people', which nevertheless were the only choice...' (Kimpouropoulos)

As exemplified, the victimised identity is negotiated in complex ways. While victimhood of the crisis and its management is accepted, responses of support or solidarity by others are perceived as either self-interested or sentimental, thus inauthentic and dishonest. As such, these might be experienced as another layer of victimisation.

In terms of the other identity narrations, some interviewees appeared to understand Greek identity as 'rebellious' within the context of the Euro crisis. For example, Andronopoulos, within a 'guinea

pig' metaphor, argued that the Memoranda were tested on the Greek people first, because they are 'rebels, so if they are implemented here, they will easily be implemented elsewhere too'. Other representations of 'rebelliousness' were not as explicit or self-overvaluing. Some participants who held highly critical views of the EU supported that Greece should 'stand up to the EU', that is, 'rebel against it' (Litsis, Papakonstantinou, Pappas). This narrative appeared to be intimately associated with the narrative of 'regime changer' in the sense that Greece could be the political actor that could instigate changes within the EU towards a more democratic regime. There was some awareness that such narratives were part of the wider and diversified international responses towards Greece during the crisis (Chountis, Pappas). Chountis, for example, mentioned that some view Greece as the actor that will question the EU and promote alternative politics.

Simultaneously, this was seen as unlikely or difficult (Chountis, Litsis, Pappas), which placed Greece within the representation of the 'underdog' that is fighting against a player who is more powerful, i.e. the EU, thus against the odds. This was additionally placed within the context of the international metanarrative of systemic EU crisis and its critique against global capitalism and neoliberalism.

'it is difficult, I cannot imagine [change], I can only imagine it if there is a full-blown rebellious change, which, however, will be confronted not only with the hot problems of tomorrow, but also the reality that countries outside the EU don't actually follow that much different economic policy... it is a question today, around the world, to find this new economic paradigm, but we know that whoever initiates this, it will not be easy, they'll be confronted with disagreements and conflicts domestically and internationally, whether they're in the EU, whether they're out...' (Litsis)

This passage exemplifies all the characteristics of revolt, regime change and waging 'underdog' struggles. Sometimes domestic actors, such as the ruling party or the 'inadequate Left' were viewed as powerless to instigate change (Chountis, Litsis). In some cases, what was perceived as one of the main obstacles of democratic and economic change was nationalised on the case of Germany, with some arguing that 'Germany would never allow it' (Chountis, Papakonstantinou). Chountis further argued that developments of radical changes within the EU, whether towards further unification, paradigm change or dissolution, are not dependent on Greece, but on 'the powerful' countries,

especially Germany. As such, it can be observed that representations of Greece as an actor of change through the narratives of rebellion, democratisation and uneven power struggle, were variably negotiated by being features of awareness, yet not strongly supported, mainly due to what was perceived as the limits of reality and possibility. This falls in line with SIT's assumptions that strategies of identity representation and re-evaluation are heavily dependent on the perception of what is realistically plausible and achievable.

This section summarised occurrences of identity overvaluation and concluded that although there were various observable such patterns which corresponded with past identity representations and international ones during the economic crisis, these were not as prominent and widespread as the representations of identity devaluation described in the previous section. As such, it appeared to be the case that in the spectrum of 'superiority and inferiority complex', supported by some participants, or identity overvaluation and devaluation vacillation of our analytical framework, devaluation was a distinctly more dominant representation, most often facilitated through processes of national critique. Nevertheless, this political critique was by no means directed only to the domestic context, but consistently coexisted with criticisms against the EU and its identity. This tendency sketched out the vivid existence of 'critical Europeanism' which at some instances was also experienced as an absence of identity choices. This pattern of identity deficit will be the focus of the next section.

Identity deficit: European identity as an absence of identity choice

In chapter three, identity deficit was discussed as a result of Greece being a mere Western invention, being represented as a disqualifiable EU member-state that could be formally excluded, or as a product of its hybrid identity, resulting in belonging neither in the West, nor in the East, thus nowhere. In chapter four, the representation of sovereignty loss appeared to be a vehicle for international identity loss within the crisis context, Grexit was represented as a European identity

loss, and status of notoriety was interpreted as an emptying of identity. Within the present interviews, these past representations were only marginally discussed, while sovereignty was a contested issue. The most significant feature of identity deficit appeared to be the choice of EU participation and European identity projected as an absence of choice. This choice appeared to be predominantly based on matters of insecurity and dependence, which can be said to increase the feeling of lack of alternative identities. The remaining section will elaborate on these problematisations.

There is No Identity Alternative

Greece's hybrid identity was often decisively resolved by the argument that Greece had no other choice but to be European through its participation in the EU and the Eurozone. The representation of absence of alternative identity choices was projected by a clear majority of participants and was one of the most prevalent features within the data. Some ideational leaders argued that wondering about Greece's identity has been a chronic preoccupation that needed to be abandoned and conclusively finalised.

'Greece has been trying to become an equal partner to Europe for the last 200 years... every once in a while there's this fairytale, this is not the first time, what are we doing in Europe, etc. And where are we supposed to be?' (Mandravelis)

'First of all... this problematisation, discussion, questioning of the country's European orientation needs to stop... just like we don't wonder whether we should have a parliament and elections, the same should go for Europe...' (Georgiadou)

Many other participants argued that economic dependence and security challenges, related to Greece's location, eliminated alternative options. As expressed,

'it depends on us to be in the EU... we need to try very hard... we haven't fully Europeanised... right now we are in the Eurozone and there is no way to exit... it would be disastrous... Greece struggles, it's obvious, but there's no other way, this is the only way...' (Giannakou)

‘Grexit is a disastrous scenario, there is no other prospect for Greece but to be in the European family... there is no other future’ (Repousi)

‘at this corner of the earth where Greece is, I don’t think there’s another ship to board on, this is the one that offers the most guarantees, we are in an area where we see what happens in Syria, in Ukraine, Iraq, Egypt, all these create high entropy around us, and being in a wider family, I think, is a one-way street...’ (Mavrotas)

‘[Greece] essentially has no other choice, what is the choice of Greece? To be partners with Syria or Egypt?’ (Tsoukalis)

‘there were always forces that viewed the country’s orientation towards Europe... if we look around us, there is no other attractive choice... our surroundings suffer from civil wars, instability, insecurity and big economic crisis, we don’t have the scope to make another choice, it’s not an ideal choice, but we have no other choice...’ (Pappas)

These security concerns additionally relate to the aforementioned representations of ‘Europe’ and the ‘Troika’ as vehicles of security and safety, and preoccupations with Greece’s feared becoming in their absence, which can be said to increase the sense of dependence on the EU for national survival. Many participants justified the absence of alternatives based on the representation of Greece as a ‘small country’ (Georgiadou, Papakonstantinou, Sotiropoulos). Being a ‘small country’ clearly entailed being dependent on a larger national or transnational entity for survival. Some speculated that if Greece left the EU, attachment to another international power would be a possible outcome or necessity (Andronopoulos, Lyritzis).

The absence of choice appeared to be shared even by individuals who were profoundly disappointed by the EU, criticised the Troika and were not self-proclaimed Europeanists. For example, journalist Petros Papakonstantinou explained that he was ‘never a warm supporter of the EU’ and that if he was told years ago that the Troika would impose such harsh programmes ‘with such inflexibility’, he ‘would not believe it’. As put, ‘even for us who were predisposed to disappointment, the disappointment was greater than anticipated’ (Papakonstantinou). Regardless though, it was admitted that ‘no serious person would consider Greece in isolation’, while EU and EMU

memberships were described as similar to ‘marriage... much more difficult to separate once you’re in it, especially if there are children involved’ (Papakonstantinou). Litsis explained that he ‘used to think that there was no other way, no matter how imperfect the EU was’, but the experience of the crisis and the management by the Troika ‘demystified the EU... for what it truly was’, an organisation characterised by national interests, lack of solidarity and inequality between states. Nevertheless, it was admitted that it was ‘difficult to imagine something new and different’ and that ‘feeling European’ was an ‘issue that the Left cannot deal with, since some things enjoyed as European citizens, like free movement and trade, we can’t imagine them going back’ (Litsis).

There is a question regarding the prevalent ‘dead-end’ character of this European identity choice, especially since most participants had difficulties defining Greece as European. In this sense, it can be argued that belonging to Europe, as justified, rationalised and preferred as it is presented to be, is partly experienced as an absence of identity, because of the co-existence of lack of legitimate alternatives and the simultaneous prevailing inability to categorise Greece as fully or unambiguously European. This results in the paradoxical condition of ‘being without being’ and ‘belonging without belonging’. The defining difference between this identity deficit and the previously described identity conflict is that it can be interpreted to be experienced as a rather compulsory and obligatory identity choice, while the conflict was characterised by the vacillation of different identity movements.

Still lost to the West?

A similar identity estrangement was observed at the national identity dimension, which partly corresponded to prior representations of Greece as a mere Western invention, therefore empty in itself. Papadimitriou, for instance, reflecting on Greece’s choices, argued that:

‘the European identity is part of our history, we can’t erase it so easily and go back where? To the heroic ancient past, which does not exactly belong to us, as such? OK, there are continuities, but it doesn’t belong to us.... that too belongs mostly to Europe! We may be

speaking the Greek language which shares continuities to the ancient Greek language, we live in the same space, see the Acropolis, move among monuments, but others have taken part of this heritage too...' (Papadimitriou)

At another instance, Papadimitriou used the word 'heterophobia' and explained how it constitutes a linguistic re-borrowing which travelled from the Greek language to the English and back to the Greek. This implied sense of loss of the ancient Greek tradition to its universalisation may invoke questions of identity deficit, particularly since some participants felt that this tradition was alien to contemporary Greek society, either due to lack of education (Smyrlis), view of it as a mere museum object (Litsis) and commodification (Karathanasopoulos), or estrangement from its values (Giannakou). In some cases, it was additionally felt that foreigners may value or know this tradition better than Greeks themselves do (Giannakou, Smyrlis).

The relationship of Greece with the West was also touched upon by the question of sovereignty, which was discussed by several participants, revealing various themes. Some participants argued that the peculiarity of Greece concentrated on its chronic dependence on foreign powers and compromise of its sovereignty by these powers (Andronopoulos, Kazakis), which in effect was perceived as eradicating the Greek voice in foreign, as well as domestic affairs, possibly creating an identity deficit. Others maintained that Greece was greatly assisted by Western allies and grew through these relationships (Pagoulatos), implying that sovereignty was not breached. The same patterns were observed in representations regarding Greece's sovereignty during the crisis. While some participants argued, either polemically or mildly, that sovereignty was compromised by the Troika crisis management and the Memoranda (Kimpouropoulos, Tsoukalis), others accepted that being indebted necessarily entailed some loss of sovereignty (Lyritzis, Tsakloglou) and acknowledged that it was the EU that actually helped Greece 'in the hour of need' (Chryssochoou, Matsaganis).

However, these two perspectives were not necessarily mutually exclusive at all times, as several participants appeared to share features of both narratives, which complexifies the image of the Troika. In addition, the role of Greece was similarly problematised by many participants who argued

that Greek governments during the crisis chose to play a passive role (Koutsiaras) and failed to negotiate (Georgiadou, Lyritzis, Matsaganis), therefore implying that sovereignty was not taken, but given up. Many asserted that the Greek government did not appear to have a 'plan of its own' which increased the impression of surrendering (Lyritzis, Kampagiannis, Panousis). Some went as far as saying that the Greek government should have been more polemical in its negotiations with the EU during the crisis and even used words, such as 'blackmail' (Andronopoulos, Pappas). Simultaneously, the role of the EU was seen as 'blackmailing' Greece, with Litsis arguing that George Papandreou was blackmailed by EU leaders into abandoning the referendum in 2011. The representation of sovereignty loss was specifically objectified around the wider representation of the EU becoming less democratic (Chrysogelos, Litsis, Tsoukalis). These representations of highly antagonistic relations add to the understanding of Greece's European identity being in conflict.

Alternatively, many argued that creditors were reasonable in their efforts to retrieve loaned funds (Ramfos, Triantafyllou). Moreover, there was a widespread view that the Troika was not only harmful, but also beneficial for implementing long-overdue reforms (Georgiadou, Mavrotas, Ramfos), while it additionally offered much needed technocratic knowledge (Smyrlis, Tsoukalis). While the question of sovereignty, crisis management and resulting identity loss was a contested one, it appeared to be the case that the one thing that most participants seemed to agree on was the assumption that the Troika experience had diminished the positive image of the EU in Greece, and even described the public sentiment as believing Greece to be under 'submission' (Kampagiannis, Litsis). As such, we could not talk of an identity deficit derived by a loss of sovereignty, since this was not a representation embraced by the participants.

Europe's identity loss

Although representations of Greece experiencing identity loss during the economic crisis were not absent from these ideational leaders' interviews, they were limited compared to other forms of

identity destabilisation, i.e. devaluation or conflict. Alternatively, within the wider climate of critical Europeanism, there were several representations of 'Europe' losing its distinction, thus its particular identity by losing or endangering its own principles, such as solidarity, pluralism, democracy, and protection of human rights (Chountis, Mavrotas, Pappas). Many participants argued that Europe had lost the advantage of 'social democratic Europe' it used to have against the 'overtly capitalist USA' (Litsis) or 'less anthropocentric China' (Marvotas).

Others maintained that Europe's international role was severely diminished not only because of the economic crisis and the rise of other major economic actors (Giannakou, Lyritzis, Mitsotakis), but also due to the EU's inability to play an active and decisive role in significant world problems, such as refugee crises and conflict (Chrysogelos, Kampagiannis, Panousis). The invitation of the IMF to participate in the Eurozone crisis resolution was seen by some as a sign of weakness (Chryssochou, Kratsa). Finally, many maintained that contemporary EU leadership was inferior and less visionary to that of the past (Andronopoulos, Repousi, Triantafyllou), while others explained that Europe was dominated by different visions, promoted by different actors (Lyritzis, Pappas), such as 'social/democratic Europe' versus 'technocratic/neoliberal Europe' (Chountis, Panousis) or 'mere common market Europe' versus 'politically visionary Europe' (Chrysogelos, Koutsiaras), which hindered its progression forwards.

Most interestingly, some participants appeared to project upon the object of 'Europe' the same problems they diagnosed for the case of Greece, such as Greece's merely cultural role and overdependence for self-esteem on long-gone historical glories, as well as economic dependence. For example, Mandravelis argued that Europe is in danger of becoming the 'Disneyland of the world' where millions of Asians visit to look at monuments of past achievements, just like tourists visit Greece to admire ancient ruins (also, Lyritzis). As Mandravelis concluded, while Asia produces products and wealth, Europe produces aging populations (also, Mitsotakis). 'You can't live on the kindness of strangers' (Mandravelis). As such, it seems that European nations do not only project

upon European identity their own positive prototypal qualities (i.e. past glory), but they also project their less positive attributes (i.e. current decay), which might be understood as part of a profoundly unbroken and invertedly vicarious identification.

Nevertheless, despite the darkly clouded predictions regarding the state of Greece or Europe, at the end of the interview with Papakonstantinou, a silver lining was retrieved:

Papakonstantinou: 'we have to compromise with being the second economy in the world, soon maybe even the third... ok, we have our role, but we are no longer the bellybutton of the earth, neither Greece, nor Europe itself... we shall live more...'

Researcher: '...modestly!'

Papakonstantinou: 'yes! More modestly! But also with fewer insecurities if you will, because it's lonely at the top, and the higher you go, the stronger the winds, and the danger to fall... so in a sense, this downgrading has its positive sides...'

Conclusively, a strange kind of liberation can be said to exist within the peaceful acceptance of the decays and splendours of human history, and all their cyclical whimsies.

Summary and conclusion

This chapter begun by displaying the shortage of past research on attitudes and identifications of Greek ideational leaders and outlined the results of the limited existing literature on the topic. A wider positive view towards European integration was recognised, as well as some reservations regarding Greece's Europeanisation. It was observed that the results of the present study show continuities with past findings, but at the same time exhibit an enrichment with newly formed dynamics and concerns emanating from the economic crisis.

In terms of identity conflicts, ideational leaders widely referred to Greece's split between East and West, as well as Greece's hybridity as both European and non-European. This hybridity was presented in both negative and positive terms, as anticipated on the basis of previous representations in historiography. In this study's expert interviews, hybridity was seen negatively

when defined as strategic and self-interested, but positively when viewed as a way to combine the 'best of both worlds' and being cosmopolitan. Looking at the reasons that participants gave for Greece's Europeanness, it was interestingly noted that ideational leaders could not identify multiple and concretely contemporary reasons for Greece being European, in direct contrast to providing many reasons for Greece not being European. Furthermore, desired and feared possible future identities were explored by ideational leaders who either asserted that Greece could become more European if it tried, or might resemble poorer and more troublesome regions of the world. Conflicts and divisions were acknowledged at the domestic and the European level with notions of mutual stereotyping between Eurosceptics and Europeanists in Greece and Southerners and Northerners in Europe. Anti-Germanism was occasionally expressed as critique towards Germany, or mentioned as a rising force in Greece, replacing what was seen as its traditional anti-Americanism.

Regarding identity devaluation, ideational leaders widely accepted the idea that Greece was stereotyped during the crisis, therefore the existence of an identity threat was not rejected. There were two main types of responses to the formation of negative stereotypes, one that refocused the discussion on Greece's accountability and called for a national self-reflection and another that claimed that negative stereotypes were strategically enacted in order to 'frame Greece' for political purposes. Although these two responses were distinct, they were not mutually exclusive, as some arguments and views were shared by representatives of both camps. While the first group downplayed the importance of being stereotyped, the second was more inclined to view it as a process of 'stigmatisation'. A vivid feature of the data appeared to be the various negotiations of versions of responsibility, ranging from the collective to the individual, to the shared/mutual and the bystander's type of responsibility. Representations of devaluating Greek exceptionalism were variably negotiated by the respondents.

As far as identity overvaluation was concerned, there were very few strategies of overvaluation, although the ones that were observed included hierarchisation of Europeanness, positive

exceptionalisation, relational and antagonistic narcissism. Most ideational leaders assumed that Greeks overvalue their national identity and criticised this social attitude as morally questionable and socially irresponsible. Conspiracy theories were also viewed as an integral part of Greek society and were criticised. Positive stereotypes that were recorded in chapter four and were projected by international media, such as those of the victim, rebel, regime changer or underdog were not widely shared by the ideational leader of this study, particularly because they were not seen as realistic and plausible identity possibilities for Greece.

Finally, with reference to identity deficits, it was argued that the projection by many that there was no other identity choice for Greece but to be European, could be interpreted as an identity void, not only because it was represented as an absence of choice, but also in light of Greece being seen as not fully European which constitutes a paradoxical kind of belonging. The question of sovereignty loss was a contested one, but was not viewed by participants as a loss of identity, therefore it did not constitute an identity crisis on the basis of deficit. Interestingly, ideational leaders argued that Europe was losing its own identity and projected the 'decaying' Greek prototype upon it.

As this chapter shows, Greek ideational leaders make several representations of identity destabilisation that were observable in previous chapters. However, they paint a different picture and enrich the pool of representations with new narratives and ideas. At the same time, they downplay or reject some of the representations projected in the international media, such as the positive stereotypes or the notions of identity losses through sovereignty compromise or Grexit. As such, identity conflict and devaluation appear to be much more prominent in their accounts. The next step in this exploration will be to see if citizens' perceptions and representations resonate with those found in historiography, international media and expert discourse.

Chapter 6

Greek Citizens on Identity and Crisis

'Here in Greece everybody speaks their own mind. The Greeks think they know everything. And I'm one of them too, one of those who think they know it all! So I answer your questions! [...] Now, everybody... thinks what they will, I always think of the positive. If the worse is to come, let it come. At my age, I'm not afraid of anything, I am free, I say what I want, and let them come and ask me why I say it!'

(Leonidas, pensioner)

Introduction

The previous chapter looked at representations of identities, destabilisations and crises made by Greek ideational leaders. This chapter will move on to explore non-expert citizens' views on the Greek debt/Eurozone crisis and their experiences of Greek European identities. Before the crisis, research of Greek attitudes towards the EU and European identities was rather scarce and episodic (i.e. Dimitras, 1992) and only appeared in the two-thousands (i.e. Chryssochoou, 2000a, 2000b; Kokosalakis, 2003; Sereti & Kokosalakis, 2003). For instance, it is only in 2011 that 'the first diachronic study of Greek opposition to European integration' (Verney, 2011a: 51) emerges. After the crisis, in the context of rising Euroscepticism across Europe, there has been a rising movement towards the study of public attitudes towards the EU, although focused research on European identities as such (i.e. Galpin, 2014) is still rare and in need of catching up. Before moving on to the results of this study, a brief overview of Greek attitudes towards the EU will be offered in order to provide a wider view at the national level and contextualise Greek shifts in attitudes within wider European public opinion.

Looking at past public opinion in Greece, although Greece is often grouped with other Southern-European EU member-states that have been understood as traditionally Euro-friendly (i.e. Llamazares & Gramacho, 2007), Greek citizens' relationship with European integration was rather ambivalent at first. Just before EEC accession, Greece was consistently above the EEC average with Eurosceptics accounting for 20% of the population, compared to Italy's 5%, Spain's 5% and Portugal's 6%. Dimitras comments (1992) that 'opinion polls indicated that were a referendum held at the time, membership would have been rejected, as the [ND] government had lost its popular support'. In 1981, the year of Greece's accession, 'a Eurosceptic high point occurred... with 60% of Greek voters support[ing] Eurosceptic parties' and the 'openly Eurosceptic' PASOK being elected to govern (Verney, 2011a: 51-52). Compared to other Southern-European countries, Greece is the only example where a Eurosceptic party was elected (Verney, 2011b). Dimitras's study (1987) in the eighties establishes that citizens who were under 30 before the 1967-1974 dictatorship, the *Generation of Polytechnio* (Γενιά του Πολυτεχνείου), were predominantly anti-Western, which facilitated Euroscepticism (Verney, 2011a).

PASOK remained in power for almost a full decade, throughout the eighties. Over time, PASOK's contestation against the EEC mellowed down (Verney, 1993), especially after the 1985 EEC loan and other capital flows from the EEC (Bourantonis *et al.*, 1998; Verney, 2011a), but never fully abandoned its critical stance. Greek public opinion followed the same trend of post-1985 declining Euroscepticism (Verney, 2011a). As put by Dimitras (1992: 37), this was a 'learning experience' for Greeks who 'discovered that the benefits from this international commitment far outweighed the costs'. The continuous support for PASOK, however, perhaps indicates a degree of public endorsement of its critical acceptance of the EEC.

By the nineties, 'Greek public opinion appeared amongst the most pro-integrationist in the EC' with Euroscepticism as low as single figure percentages (Verney, 2011a: 52; also, Dimitras, 1992). The 'post-Maastricht blues' (Eichenberg & Dalton, 2007), appeared to have limited impact on Greece,

where support for European integration remained above the EU average throughout the decade. Views on the Euro were positive in the early two-thousands, as indicated by Kokosalakis's study (2003) with Greeks thinking that the currency would be more secure for Greece and would offer greater opportunities for economic development. However, after the mid-two-thousands, Euroscepticism showed an upwards trend, with scepticism over EU benefits reaching one-third (33%) of the population by mid-2009 (Verney, 2011a).

After the economic crisis, Eurobarometer-based research reveals that negative sentiments towards the EU increased across all social groups and support for the EU declined, although support for the Euro rose (Clements *et al.*, 2014; Freire *et al.*, 2014). As put (Clements *et al.*, 2014: 247), 'Greek public opinion has fallen out of love with the EU, but it clearly does not want to leave the Eurozone or renounce membership altogether'. Comparative research has indicated that economically healthy member states are afraid that European economic governance may harm their economy, while people in crisis-ridden countries welcome it (Kuhn & Stoeckel, 2014). As explained, 'the better a country's economy, the less inclined are its citizens to endorse economic governance' (Kuhn & Stoeckel, 2014: 637).

Compared to other member-states, Greece was the country with the highest increase in negative attitudes towards EU membership and greatest loss of support (Braun & Tausendpfund, 2014; Clements *et al.*, 2014; Serricchio *et al.*, 2013). More specifically, between 2008 and 2011, the percentage of Greek citizens who thought that EU membership was 'a bad thing' almost tripled, rising from 12% to 33%, compared to an increase from 15% to 18% across the EU as a whole (Verney, 2015). Those who believed that Greece had 'no benefit' from EU membership almost doubled from 27% in 2008 to 50% in 2011, while the EU average only rose from 31% to 37% (Verney, 2015). All and all, levels of Euroscepticism in Greece have been said to experience a 'return to the eighties' (Freire *et al.*, 2014), placing Greek public sentiment towards the EU back where it started.

The 2014 Euroelections illustrated how the crisis has been a ‘game-changer in attitudes towards European integration’ in Greece, with a ‘Eurosceptic triumph [that] would have seemed unthinkable at the time of the previous Euroelection [i]n 2009’ (Verney, 2015: 279). Following the trend of domestic elections, both SYRIZA and Golden Dawn, were moved from the margins of Euroelection candidacy to centre stage (Verney, 2015), which indicated that the ‘rising vote for Eurosceptic parties [was] not simply a side-effect of domestic protest’, but a result of the EU becoming ‘a significant electoral target’ (Verney, 2015: 279).

As such, it appears to be the case that political disaffection with the EU has been on the rise in Greece. Nevertheless, we still cannot fathom the particularities, subtleties and complexities of public opinion, based on these survey-based studies. Although they are especially useful in showing overall trends over time and aggregate patterns, the original voices of citizens themselves seem to be missing. This chapter offers a window to the views, experiences, arguments and justifications of citizens and attempts to understand the effects of the economic crisis on people’s national and European identities.

Identity conflict: national and European identity conflicts

In the previous chapter, ideational leaders focused on representations of Greece as torn between East and West, as well as between its European and non-European identities. Noticeably, it was largely argued that Greece was mostly non-European and to the degree that it was believed to be partly European, few reasons could be retrieved for its Europeanness, as compared to its non-Europeanness. The representation of hybridity was presented as a problem to the degree that Greece was perceived as needing to become more European, while the representation of strategic hybridity as a form of selectivity was also projected. Furthermore, positively valued representations of hybridity were also promoted as either a form of cosmopolitanism or a combination of ‘the best of both worlds’. In addition, Greece was represented as a divided nation, lacking in national

consensus. At the European level, two themes were prominent, namely, the division between North and South, which reproduced another geo-schematic distinction, and the acknowledgement of mutual stereotyping between European countries.

Still between East and West?

Similarly to the ideational leaders' interviews, within the citizens' interviews, geo-schematic references of East and West, or North and South, were present, although to a lesser degree. Nevertheless, the chasm between the Occident and the Orient was mentioned by one third of participants. Some spoke of the 'crossroads' (Aris, self-employed; Grigoris, private sector employee) and 'borderline' character of Greece, 'at the limits' (Gerasimos: public servant; Kalliopi, unemployed). One participant commented on this condition of 'mixture', saying that 'Greece suffers from a personality disorder' (Kalliopi, unemployed), which signifies a perception of identity destabilisation. In a similar fashion, another participant argued that:

'to some degree [national and European identity] come into conflict. On the one side, you can't be screaming that we have the absolute free movement of ideas, there's no censorship and people can express themselves as they wish, there's tolerance, and on the other hand, all these coming into antithesis with what the average Greek believes, influenced by an oversized past from 2,000 years ago, combined with the Orthodox Church... which itself is completely antithetical with the ancient past... regardless, the Golden Dawn is Helleno-Orthodox and adores the ancient past... what I mean is this is a huge conflict... and at least clinically, wherever we have conflict, we have a problem. All human problems are created by the conflicts that exist' (Dionysis, public servant)

As illustrated, both the Greek and European identity dimensions appear to experience conflict, as well as different dimensions of Greek identity as such are said to be conflictual, i.e. the ancient past and the Orthodox Church. Furthermore, this is represented as a 'clinical problem', adding another pathologising metaphor, i.e. the clinical patient. This example further reinstates not only the question of hybridity as a 'problem', which was prevalent in previous chapters, but also the question of Greece's selectivity as 'strategic hybridity'. As seen, the participant suggests that Greece is being selective in claiming to embrace democratic values, i.e. freedom of speech, implied to be European,

while simultaneously embracing nationalist signifiers, i.e. an 'oversized' self-esteem, attributed to incompatible national elements, i.e. the ancient and Christian traditions.

A few more participants referred to such dynamics of selectivity. Chrysanthos (private sector employee), for instance, commented 'when we want to, we are European; when we don't want to, we are Greek'. Some criticised what they saw as a Greek attitude of being European during 'good times' and non-European during 'hard times'.

'[Greece] says yes to Europe to receive funds, but when it comes to being ok with its responsibilities it goes back to the attitude which existed before joining the EU, which is a double standard, very contentious...' (Stavros, self-employed)

'First of all, a country needs to want to be European... and to accept certain things in order to be European. What I mean is that declaring that you want to be European when there's money flowing, but talking about the English or the Germans, and that we were building Parthenons when they were still eating acorns, you understand that this is clearly not... being able to acknowledge the diversity of the other, to accept it - ok, to be frustrated with it when there's something clearly wrong with it, yes - but not just because it is unfamiliar to you... in this respect, I feel that many Greeks are not European, they didn't have this acceptance...' (Neophytos, self-employed)

As can be seen, some citizens were agreeable with the view that Greece is selective and strategically self-hybridised due to self-interest and instrumentality, as was proclaimed by some ideational leaders. Nevertheless, in a similar way to MEP Chrysogelos's comment that such matters are not peculiar to Greece alone, Neophytos added that 'many Europeans are not European either, only those who had their minds open enough to embrace the different, while preserving their own identity... this is what I think Europe is'. As pointed out, acceptance of diversity was enacted by this participant to the defining feature of Europeanness, constructing the European prototype, as well as its lack of fulfilment by most Europeans. Interestingly, the same participant was particularly selective himself regarding Europe by his explicit identification with it, explaining that he was a 'traditional federalist, devotee of the European project and the EU', yet repeated attempts to define Europe on political grounds solely, rather than economic. 'You see, I don't speak about economics at all',

implying that the political vision of Europe is what matters. Nevertheless, economics is undeniably a primary feature of European integration and cannot be ignored.

Although ideational leaders discussing selective hybridism concentrated on how this is directed towards Europe or the West, some participants suggested that this selectivity is also directed towards the East. For instance, Kalliopi, who had lived in several countries in the past and was in a position to compare, referred to the East and the particular features she felt she shared, or wished to share, as a Greek.

‘when you live together with other ethnicities abroad, you realise that you have many common features with the East... with Turkey, Asia, they themselves also view us Greeks as more of their own people, compared to, let’s say, the Italians... this is where I feel, many Greeks must feel it, that we have many commonalities with the East... even the corruption, we share that, random? I don’t think so... yes, we are [mixed], but it also depends... if you meet someone who tells you that ‘women who smoke, we’d kill them in my country’, you say, ‘I am in Europe, we don’t do these things’. Right there, you feel European. But when you go out together for entertainment, to dine, there you see many commonalities with the East, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan... yeah, it depends...’ (Kalliopi, unemployed)

As can be seen, identification with the East is claimed here selectively, being rejected on the basis of social practices regarding gender roles, the use of violence and political values, such as gender equality and personal freedom, but endorsed on more aesthetic and lifestyle grounds, like food and entertainment. This echoes Pappas’s commentary on ‘culinary matters’ in the previous chapter, perhaps indicating a compartmentalisation of the East on ‘entertainment’ practices only. In terms of government organisation and political culture, corruption is understood to be common between Greece and the East, therefore some political aspects are understood as shared.

Echoing Kampagiannis’s comment from the previous chapter on Greece’s hybridity being an opportunity for a cosmopolitan identity, one participant argued in favour of cosmopolitanism, but an implied selectivity undermined this choice.

‘Greece... should be a country with many influences. It’d be interesting to see this expressed in many things, in music, art, film, food... right there we got it because we are

kalofagades ²⁹, we have a Mediterranean cuisine, influenced by the East... I'd love Greece to be like the good side of Istanbul, multidimensional... but not like today, having the immigrants who pass through on their way to Denmark and get stuck here, because truth be told, we don't have good immigrants, we don't...' (Grigoris, private sector employee)

In this less egalitarian representation of 'good and bad immigrants' and the 'good and bad side of Istanbul', cosmopolitanism is only embraced selectively, on mere aesthetic criteria (i.e. music, art), rather than political ones, such as inclusion of all people and equality. The same participant appeared to argue at another point that 'the East doesn't have much to show for itself', reproducing negative Orientalist stereotypes. The reference to Istanbul might be understood as an attempt to recreate the age-old and mythologised representation of *the City*, as many Greeks simply call Istanbul, as the 'eternal jewel of Bosphorus' with its former glory as a 'melting pot' of many cultures at the legendary urban sea-port between East and West (Lawrence, 2012). This evocation of the 'cosmopolitan meta-city' (Lawrence, 2012) as a desired model for Greece might also be a somehow nationalist allusion to Istanbul by its Greek name as *Constantinople*, which was once upon a time considered the epicentre of Hellenism within the Byzantine Empire (Dimaras, 1972) and then lost to the Ottoman Empire.

Comparable Orientalist/Balkanist representations appeared to be shared by another participant who argued that 'without the EU, we'd still be *Tourkalvano!*' (Aphrodite, public servant). The use of the term 'Tourkalvano!', literally meaning 'Turkish-Albanian', can be said to be peculiar here, not as much in its historical implication or inaccuracy, but rather in its symbolic usage and possible derogatory tone. While it brings to the fore the issue of ethnic diversity which formed the demographic base of the modern Greek state, within which various Albanophone ethnic groups, such as Arvanites and Tsamides existed, among Vlachs, Slavs, Sephardic Jews (Karakasidou, 2011) and various Muslims (Turks, Pomaks or Roma, Yakoumaki, 2007), it might be understood to be used here to connote 'Muslim-Albanians'. In this case it can be said to carry Orientalising connotations

²⁹ 'We are *kalofagades*' translates as 'we know how to eat well'.

due to the predominant, yet imprecise, stereotypical association of Islam with the Orient, as well as the historical discrimination of Muslim Albanians by Greek governments and society. This perhaps becomes more salient in the cognitive associations made by the same participant, saying that:

‘I think that the Greek national identity has been influenced in its conservative, provincial *Tourkalvanitiki* identity, not in the Greek identity of philosophy, democracy, etc., that is, the conservative part of the Greeks has been increased, not the patriotic one that says that Greeks will make it, they have roots[...] As some say... Greece is the cradle of civilisation, which is true, with the difference that the modern Greeks are not the ancient Greeks... after Byzantium the Greeks didn’t exist, there were Turks and Albanians, this is who we are. I personally am one of the ancient Greeks of course...!’ (Aphrodite, public servant)

A representation of dual Greek identity is formed here, split between the ancient Greek and the so-called ‘*Tourkalvanitiki*’, which can be said to be reproducing Orientalist/Balkanist notions to the degree that it associates the latter with negative stereotypes, such as being conservative, provincial, weak-spirited and unpatriotic, while the former appears as philosophical, democratic, strong-spirited and patriotic. Moreover, the representation appears to be contradictory in itself, claiming (ancient) Greeks as non-existent, yet possible to be claimed as a current identity, differentiating the self from others. In this perplexed manner, although this representation rightly abandons the continuity of Greek identity from ancient times to modernity, as prescribed by expert knowledge, it reproduces the basic Orientalist postulate that Greece was made by ‘good’ Hellenistic elements and ‘lesser’ Oriental/post-Ottoman ones.

At another instance, the same participant distinguished between Balkan and Mediterranean identities, but rejected the Turkish Mediterranean, which might be attributed to the influence of historical hostility between the two countries or a pattern of hierarchisation of European prototypicality, as was exhibited in the previous chapter.

‘I feel I share many commonalities with people from the Mediterranean, including North Africa, the Italians, the Spanish, the Portuguese... unfortunately with the Turkish too, which I can’t stand! In no way I feel Balkan, I feel Mediterranean. Now, European, I don’t know if I feel...’ (Aphrodite, public servant)

Informal ethnographic participant observations during fieldwork indicated that Balkanism, defined as negative imagery of the Balkans (Todorova, 2009), was indeed a contemporary internal feature of Greek society. For example, it was discovered during informal discussions with social acquaintances that some Southern-Greek Athenian citizens think of Northern-Greek Thessalonikians as ‘too Balkan’ and ascribe negative values to the object of ‘Balkans’, like being ‘brutal’ or ‘crude’. As such, in this sense, past patterns of discrimination of ‘new Greeks’ from Northern Greece or Greek Macedonia, as well as refugees from Asia Minor and Pontians from the Black Sea who fled Turkey and immigrated to Greece, may still be evident today in Greek society. These representations might be resting on age-old historical patterns, such as the later acquisition of these populations and their ethnic or linguistic heterogeneity, and may relate to the persistent identity conflict of East and West of Greek European identity, as well as misguided quest for Europeanisation defined as Westernisation.

A sharp contrast was observed in another participant’s account of the East/West divide, who argued that Greece must accept its Oriental characteristics, rather than wish to discard or hide them. In his words,

‘...whether Greece is a European country, I have reservations, we have many features, and we like having them, Oriental features. This is part of us and we shouldn’t throw it away... it’s like someone acquiring a culture, by going to the university, conversing with people of a higher social status, but forgetting that his grandfather came from a small village... he shouldn’t forget that. He should go back to that village, listen to the language his grandfather once spoke, because whether he wishes it or not, he carries that with him... us Greeks are sort of like that.’ (Gerasimos, public servant)

Within this metaphor, although Eastern features are similarly represented negatively as ‘provincial’, (i.e. ‘small village’) and European identity is reproduced once again as one of a ‘higher status’, these are not seen as something one ‘cannot stand’ as in the previous example, but as something to accept and preserve. The same participant added that ‘Europe needs to accept that Greece is special, not because Greeks are lazy, but because it is the South-Eastern edge, which enriches it with Oriental elements’. Similarly, another participant agreed that Europe needs to accept all European identities, including the Balkans (Kyveli, unemployed). In this sense, it was implied that Europe itself

is not accepting of the Orient and the Balkans, constructing the European prototype as less than inclusive and egalitarian.

Beyond the distinction between East and West, most participants thought that Greece was simultaneously both European and non-European, some respondents thought Greece was largely not European, and few participants responded that Greece was European without placing a question mark on its Europeanness. These results approximate the results of the ideational leaders' interviews. In terms of reasons given for Greece being European, fewer reasons were given compared to reasons for not being European, which agreed with the views of ideational leaders. Although the two dominant reasons for being European in the ideational leaders' interviews were the ancient Greek tradition and geographical location, in the citizens' interviews only the latter was a dominant justification. This signposts that the narrative of Greece being foundational of European identity was not widely shared by this study's participants, as only a few citizens mentioned it. This may indicate a reluctance to make positive usage of an identity feature that has been criticised as an indication of nationalism and identity overvaluation, as was seen in the ideational leaders' critical opinions. As such, participants in this study did not use this facet to position Greece within the European prototype. Other reasons that were given for Greece's European belonging was sharing political values, such as democracy, receiving funds, having relations with other countries, being a member of the EU or EMU, common history, and random luck/coincidence.

Similarly to the ideational leaders' views, citizens were able to present many more reasons as to why Greece was not European. The primary reasons included being disorganised and lacking the structures, having a different culture to other Europeans, widespread corruption, lower living standards and quality of life, and a wider feeling of 'being behind' or 'backwards'. Other reasons included being Oriental/Balkan or similar to an African/Third World country, insufficient health services, inadequate education, culture of entertainment, low credibility, being racist, overvaluing Greek identity, underdeveloped institutions and laws, being selective, lacking European political

values, being too religious or having strong relations between Church and state, and having wrong priorities, such as money over knowledge. Inadvertently, the content of the European prototype is sketched out as the opposite of the above: organised, not corrupted, high living standards, advanced, and so on. As it becomes apparent, several justifications were common between citizens and ideational leaders, exemplifying remarkable correspondence. A difference between citizens and leaders' representations perhaps was that the first were more vocal and specific about corruption and provision of services, while the latter were more abstract regarding these issues and used more generalised terms such as 'institutional shortcomings' or the 'rule of law'.

In terms of narratives coming out of citizens' responses, there were no grand narratives as such, as was the case with the ideational leaders', most probably due to the more limited character of anchoring around the East/West schema, which provided the main axis of narration in the previous chapters. Nevertheless, some similar arguments were shared by some citizens and formed looser narrative lines, which dictated that a) Greek culture is not compatible with the European culture, b) Greece tries to be European, or others try to make it more European, but this does not seem to be working, c) it is adhered democratic values that make Greece European, and d) Greece's situation is so negative that it should be located in Africa, not in Europe.

Beginning with the first and second narratives, some young and unemployed participants argued that Greek culture is in dissonance with the European, while there was a sense that political attempts to remedy this discord are, thus far, insoluble.

'I don't think that us Greeks could ever adjust with their [the Europeans'] attitude... we have a different culture, we are not as organised as they are, I don't know... a different way of life, I mean, we want to go out at night, have fun... above all, good times is what our lives are about, on Sundays the family gets together and enjoys... they [the Europeans] don't understand that, they think why would you do that?... maybe our children will learn to be different through education... learn a different culture' (Aggeliki, unemployed)

'[Greece is] not so much [European], because there's a lot of corruption with our politicians, so no... even if we wanted to, we don't know how to be a European country, with a good economy, no chaos, health services, no way... there are many negatives, so I don't think

Greece is a European country. I suppose the Troika tries to make Greece more European, which will never happen, it's like trying to teach an old man a new game, he will insist on his own ways...' (Charalampos, unemployed)

Similarly to the ideational leaders, participants projected more or less optimistic views regarding Greece's future convergence to a European prototype, while the latter was implicitly or explicitly seen as desirable.

In contrast, some participants thought that Greece's political culture made it sufficiently European.

For example,

'yes we are European, we have democracy, freedom, we even have every lunatic telling us what he will... and we let him be outside, while he probably should be in a mental institution, that much democratic... we are a democratic country and we should be in Europe. Most European countries are democratic' (Leonidas, pensioner)

'what makes a country European... respect for what's human, its uniqueness, particularity, individuality, dignity... respect for freedom, independence, democracy, these are the elements of a European country. I think Greece is a European country, we have these, we even had them before! Even if we suppose that some people are a bit more conservative, they'd still let you be, they wouldn't restrict you, you have your own space to move, as far as you don't overstep on somebody else's space... I believe this is true in Greece' (Rodanthi, student)

Within these examples, political elements, such as democracy and freedom, are interpreted as characteristics of European identity and the categorisation of Greece as an owner of these characteristics situates it within the European prototype. We may add that this allusion to the high tolerance of Greek society, i.e. 'everybody letting everybody be' constitutes the other side of what was negatively constructed by some ideational leaders (i.e. Panousis, Repousi) as excessive Greek permissiveness, i.e. 'everybody doing whatever they want'.

In the previous chapter ideational leaders expressed concern that Greece might become an Oriental/Balkan/Global South country in the future. Some citizens focused on Greece's past trajectory instead and situated Greece in the Global South, objectified around the particular example of 'Africa'.

‘as far as I can remember, there were many times in the past that I thought that we were on the wrong continent... there were such tragic incidents happening, incoherent things compared to the location we are situated on, I thought that we should had been in Africa, in the sense that we are boorish sometimes, *kaffirs*, disorganised and mean, but now I don’t think that, I’m over it...’ (Aristeidis, pensioner)

‘sometimes I say that we shouldn’t be attached to the EU, we should probably be in the African continent, and perhaps I am insulting Africa right now, because some African countries may have better structures than we do, their governments better structured than ours...’ (Eleftheria, private sector employee)

Similarly to the Orientalist representations above, there was negative imagery constructed regarding Africa and comparisons were made to Greece with reference to its European identity. While in the first example, the object of ‘Africa’ is attributed negative values, i.e. boorish, and even the derogatory word ‘kaffirs’³⁰ is used, in the second representation negative stereotyping is counter-balanced by criticising one’s own choice to make such comparison in the first place. These representations resonate with an ideational leader’s observation that ‘we often love to say that we are an African country with white people’ (Lyrintzis).

National divisions during the crisis

Citizens and political elites: a bridgeless divide

Moving on to wider divisions within Greek society, ideational leaders in the previous chapter spoke about the lack of national consensus. Within citizens’ interviews, various representations of national conflicts were present. For instance, some participants commented that there is a conflictual relationship between citizenry and government, which was specifically objectified around the question of trust.

‘in Greece, the relationship between the citizen and the government is at a point zero; the

³⁰ The word ‘kaffir’ originates in the Arabic language and used to mean ‘infidel and non-Muslim’. A more recent usage is found in South Africa, where it was used to refer to ‘any black African person’ in a discriminatory manner. The term is now legally banned and its use punishable (Dictionary.com).

citizen doesn't trust it, he never did...' (Gerasimos, public servant)

'Nobody trusts anyone. The government doesn't trust the citizens, the citizens don't trust the government, so everyone tries to operate without taking each other into account ... the government doesn't care how the taxes will be paid, on the other hand, the citizen doesn't care to pay taxes to such a government... now if the government owes you money, you'll get it, if you do, after decades... if you owe the government 150 euros and can't pay, it will hunt you down till the end... therefore, there's no relation whatsoever between citizen and government, they are two completely different things, where the one sees the other in a hostile way' (Dionysis, public servant)

When participants were asked if, and how, they were politically influenced by the economic crisis, quite a few mentioned that they did not trust the government before, and continued to feel the same after the crisis, because the crisis reaffirmed their beliefs (Kalliopi, unemployed; Rodanthi, student; Tasoula, private sector employee). For others, the crisis directly contributed to losing their sense of trust, as was the case with Martha, a public servant, who had lost more than 40% of her income.

'Politically, yes, in the sense that once upon a time we used to believe, we held some ideologies and we thought that there were some people who could represent us... now, I don't believe these people exist, now I think they are all the same, and they all want to seize the power... so yes, politically I lost the trust towards the people who govern us...' (Martha, public servant)

As exemplified, several citizens view the relationship between political elites and citizens as either conflictual or non-existent, and construct the image of a society that lacks social capital, mutual trust and will for reciprocity, features that are understood as important for a well-functioning democracy (Putnam, 2001). As was seen above, the lack of trust is understood as a psychological motivation for non-cooperation between government and citizens on the matter of tax-collection and its result in a malfunctioning taxing and revenue system.

'Two categories of citizens': public and private sector employees

In terms of social divisions between public and private sector employees, although these were only

marginally mentioned by a few ideational leaders, they were discussed more extensively by citizens. Some openly blamed public servants for the economic fallout of the country and made comparisons between public servants and the private sector employees or the unemployed, in terms of sharing the consequences of the economic crisis.

‘the private sector has ended, it doesn’t exist anymore, there’s no dignity for the worker, they took everything from us... the public servants, because they were hired by the political parties themselves, are still holding on[...] right now, those who are not to blame for the crisis are the ones who pay for it, while those who are implicated within the parties don’t have a care, because they are protected... millions of unemployed, and only a few thousands fired from the public sector...’ (Nestoras, pensioner)

‘what’s to blame is that the public sector didn’t work[...] and the politicians only cared to be re-elected for another four years... now that we’ve come here, many need to leave from the public sector, so that it can stand on its feet again, because the private sector cannot keep on paying for the public servants who only sit down... the private sector works hard, sweats, suffers, because they are not permanent... it is only the public sector’s fault for where we are now’ (Leonidas, pensioner)

These two pensioners were very critical of public servants, most probably because they had been private sector employees in the past and felt that they did not enjoy the same privileges. As one of them added, ‘I never knew anyone who could grant me any special favours’ (Nestoras, pensioner). Another pensioner made the same argument stating that ‘none of my kids worked in the public sector... I never had any political acquaintances, so I never went to anyone to ask for anything’ (Alkiviadis, pensioner). These distancing strategies might be attributed as strategies aiming to manage a possible identity threat induced to the group of pensioners, which was one of those that were most intensely blamed for the crisis, along with the public sector, since they were considered politically and economically active during the Metapolitefsi era. In this sense, these statements might be understood as attempts to declare one’s ethical conduct, thus ethical identity.

However, participants from other socio-economic groups, who were never public servants or pensioners, and were too young to be considered active within the same period, also tried to differentiate themselves from the public sector and expressed criticism towards it.

‘I think we deserve what’s happening to us now. I’m very aware about this, and I’ve never been on the side of those who benefitted, I don’t mean this in a vengeful way, I never wanted to benefit, I never thought about entering the public sector, I never ratted on nobody to get a post, I never voted for PASOK... I’ve been fired many times from the private sector, was left unpaid several times, even without Memoranda, I’ve seen this movie many times, so now the rest get to see it too...’ (Grigoris, private sector employee)

‘regarding being tough on the public servants, on how they entered, how they progressed, the salaries they received compared to the private sector, yes, it might sound bad, but I think this is done for the better... it will balance out this disparity... The public servants have many privileges, they always did... maybe it sounds like punishing, because they’re not used to such measures... I don’t come from a family of public servants myself, maybe it feels sad... or extreme for them, but I think it will install some order in the public sector’ (Kalliopi, unemployed)

Within these examples, participants appear to be conscious that their representations might be perceived as conflictual and hostile against public servants. This self-awareness is exemplified in self-clarifying expressions, such as ‘I don’t mean this in a vengeful way’ and negotiations, such as ‘it might sound bad, but I think...’. While the first example may appear more unforgiving and critical (i.e. ‘the rest get to see it too’), the second attempts to employ an empathetic attitude (i.e. ‘maybe it feels sad, but...’). Nevertheless, they both indicate that the object of ‘public servants’ has acquired a negative cognitive association and was accompanied by variably conflictual attitudes towards them, illustrating the existence of intensified social divisions within Greek society during the crisis.

Public servants who participated in this study were asked to comment on being blamed for the crisis. While one participant felt misjudged and being in conflict with other fellow citizens, another felt that blaming against public servants was justified.

‘I have personally come into opposition with friends and relatives who agree with the [crisis] measures, and blame us, because they say that we waste the money, and they are the ones to pay for us, the classic line... as if the public servants don’t pay taxes, in fact the public servants are the only ones who can’t hide their income... [the public sector] has been hit, and has received all the blaming too, all the name-calling... even arguments like if you get pregnant, you’ll stand down for eighteen months, while I’ll have only five... instead of all of us trying to move towards the better, you want to pull me down, just because you don’t have the same? And besides, in the private sector you can evolve professionally, in the public this is very difficult...’ (Martha, public servant)

‘I’ve worked in the private sector for many years before I became a public [servant], I’ve changed many occupations, from factories to construction, and my family members are all

in the private sector... I believe the accusations against public servants are not right, but they have some foundation. The public servant in Greece has been extremely protected for the last fifty, sixty years, in everything, vacations, privileges, so many privileges they had... with the result that there were two citizen categories in Greece, the public and the private sector employees... I have personally experienced this, truly, since I was hired, I have been protected... while in the private sector I was up in the air[...] it was preferred to hit the private sector and protect the public, which brings society to a division, a justified division...' (Gerasimos, public servant)

As exemplified by the examples above, negative social attitudes against public servants are anchored on the question of privileges and social comparisons with socio-economic groups that are perceived to have fewer such privileges. As a result, chronic perceived inequality between these groups amounts to feelings of relative deprivation and perception of justified crisis measures against public servants. As appears, public servants variably accept the superiority of these privileges and while some project defensive arguments, others accept the indictments.

Cultures of conflict and of solidarity

Participants additionally talked about the existence of a wider conflictual culture in Greece. Some of these divisions were described as long-term and others were presented as crisis specific. Gerasimos (public servant), for instance, talked about Greeks being 'obsessed with suing each other'. As put, 'our neighbour is basically our enemy' (Gerasimos, public servant). Neophytos (self-employed) argued the following, while discussing what is good or bad about Greek society.

'Paradoxically, I won't say solidarity, because as a peoples we've always been cannibalising each other[...] our worst vice is our discord, for everything, historically proven... our endless cannibalism, endless... this is the human species... here, perhaps for social and historical reasons, it is more intense. All of these [crisis] measures that passed were founded on this social automatism that asked why. All this dismantling of social welfare was based on why should the teachers rest for three months? Which they don't do. Why should the public servants stand down? Which they don't do. Why should the private sector employees take these wages? Which they don't take... he has more, so we're going to eat him up, what can you call this? Jealousy? Sometimes it's not even that, sometimes you want to eat up someone who doesn't even have more than you, just has something different... people who just wish the destruction of others, this is what you see right now, people just want to witness, and be happy with, the downfall of another... the neighbour's

goat must die ³¹...' (Neophytos, self-employed)

As shown, this participant presented Greek society, and as an extension Greek social identity, as particularly divisive and lacking in attributes that contribute to social capital, such as solidarity. This discord is presented both as a long-term historical phenomenon, reproducing representations of Greece as a 'divided nation', and as a crisis-specific phenomenon (i.e. 'this is what you see right now'). The psychological phenomenon of experiencing joy with the pain of others is a well-known one in social psychology, called *schadenfreude* and defined as 'malicious pleasure at the suffering of another' (Leach *et al.* 2003: 932). In the Greek language, the compound word *chairekakia* (χαίρεκακία) from the *chaire* (χαίρε), meaning 'to feel joy', and *kakia* (κακία) meaning 'malice' would be the equivalent of the German word 'schadenfreude'.

Regarding dynamics of social conflict during the crisis, Paulos (unemployed) commented that the economic crisis 'has created a negative aggressive attitude in everybody, simultaneously defensive, which tests their limits, as well as your own' in everyday life, combined with 'a chasm of our [Greek] unity, since everybody cares only about themselves now'. Eleftheria (private sector employee) agreed that social solidarity was lacking during the crisis.

'it is very difficult to talk to the person next to you... this shows in strikes too, the private sector employees go on strike... and there is no support from ADEDY... every sector, the teachers go on strike, they are not supported by other public servants, the co-workers from other subsectors... they say they rest for three months, we have a vengeful behaviour towards our fellow citizens, our fellow people... if I am threatened, I'll go on strike, if I'm not, I'll let others go, I won't participate, as if the misfortune will never come to me...' (Eleftheria, private sector employee)

In this representation, the schema of 'schadenfreude' as characteristic of Greek identity within the crisis is reaffirmed, i.e. 'vengeful' attitude towards others. Furthermore, there are additional allusions to individuality and self-interest, representations often made by other participants too, which complement the image of a society and a social identity that falls short of social cohesion and

³¹ The reference to the 'neighbour's goat' is related to a well-known joke around Greece and the wider Eastern Europe which aptly describes this psychological phenomenon, since according to the scenario, when one's goat dies, he prefers to see the neighbour's goat die too, rather than receive a new goat for free.

mutual support. Very few participants referred to initiatives of solidarity and voluntarism during the crisis, which indicates that the outlook towards the evaluation of Greek society was negative, rather than positive.

Left and right: radicalisations and internal contradictions

Regarding ideological distinctions, Triantafyllou argued in the previous chapter that there is a radicalisation of the Left and Right in Greece during the economic crisis, as well as an age-old historical divide between the two. Within citizens' interviews, these claims were affirmed when several participants observed that Greek society is 'radicalised' and 'polarised' (i.e. Aggelos, student; Kyriaki, student; Laurentis, self-employed). Furthermore, some participants who self-identified as 'leftists' described the political impact of the crisis upon them as one that made them more 'radical' and 'extreme'.

'I've always been in the area of the left, but now I think that my positions are more extreme than they used to be before... In the past, I used to water my wine a bit, now I think these times are over, I hope that my fellow citizens realise this too... if we don't make claims with valence, with force, with perseverance, with endurance, with our struggle lasting in time, we will not have any results... (Eleftheria, private sector employee)

'[although I was] a child that grew up in a radical left family, I had the opportunity to study, I don't belong to those older generations when the child of the poor could not study, and when someone studies... as you can understand, they move their views and cannot be extreme anymore, not because of the studies as such, but because they can recognise many perspectives, right? But for now, I have a very specific position... the exit from the Euro is a leftist position, ok, right now, I am extremely leftist, that is, I want exit from Europe, the monetary union, NATO, from everywhere... you can't have mobilisation of the right, the extreme right, and you, me, and whoever, who is educated and leftist being flexible, this cannot be... when the Golden Dawner comes to smash your head because you are leftist, you can't sit around theorising, you must defend yourself... so to answer your question, of course I've changed, because in the old days, I used to be a progressed centrist citizen...' (Grigoris, private sector employee)

As illustrated, these citizens engage in self-reflection and openly explain how the crisis changed their political views. In the second example, it becomes apparent that the crisis has affected this

participant's support for the EU, as well as the NATO, contributing to the formation of a more anti-European and anti-Western political identity. Furthermore, a direct opposition is constructed between the extreme Left, *Akroaristeroi*, and the extreme Right, i.e. the Golden Dawners, *Chrysavgites*.

A participant who voted for the GD in the national elections of 2012, and was planning to vote for it again in the European elections, reaffirmed this dislike towards the Left and related protesters, when he commented 'this ridicule of the Indignants, the Leftists, of SYRIZA and all the youngsters doing their thing in Syntagma...' (Dimosthenis, private sector employee). In terms of ideology, the same participant added the following, when asked what should change in Greece in order to move towards better times.

'to come a step closer to utopia, that is, to initiate a herdism, to have unified principles, unified parts in order for it to work, to not have free will in the way it exists today, since after all it is our decisions and choices that led us here... so if you remove this element, what results? Besides the equality, happiness, no wars, no hunger, no conflicts, there will not be any different ideology, which ultimately has nothing to offer anyways, if you think about it...' (Dimosthenis, private sector employee)

As exemplified, in this representation, the solution to the crisis, as well as to Greece's identity conflict, appears to be the eradication of all ideologies and free will, combined with a docile, herd-like, unified society. In the questionnaire, this GD supporter justified his voting choice saying that 'the instability and cannibalism of GD would force the family business of Greece into thinking' (Dimosthenis, private sector employee). In this sense, a paradoxically conflicted representation is projected here by simultaneously promoting 'cannibalism', thus conflict, nevertheless in the name of future peace, under the disappearance of all ideas, hence of all thinking, resulting by the 'force' of the very same process. i.e. 'thinking'.

Another participant who had voted for the right-wing, nationalist political party ANEL and was now planning to vote for GD in the European elections, therefore had moved closer to the extreme right edge, expressed internal conflict after the interview in an off-the-record conversation. As indicated

in the previous chapter, it is sometimes after the turning off of the recorder that participants feel the urge to express internal contradictions. On this occasion, the participant although not prompted or asked directly to justify his choice, he expressed problematisation about his electoral choice and in an almost apologetic tone said that he didn't know if he 'would go through with it'. In any case, in the questionnaire, his justification for voting for the GD concerned 'attempts to remove GD MPs from the Parliament with imprisonments and unsubstantiated accusations' which mobilised him to 'support them'.

Internal conflict appeared to problematise another participant who expressed intense feelings related to the inability to find crisis solutions and be optimistic about the future. Outlining and subsequently rejecting a series of proposals, such as 'becoming a German protectorate', 'changing the government', 'finding an enlightened new leader' or 'massive executions and gallows' poles at the square', the participant questioned 'within the unavoidable context of democracy, what can be done?'. Unable to find answers, the participant concluded that the pessimism is so grave that 'only extreme ideas come to your head, and exactly because you understand that they are extreme, you swallow your tongue...' (Neophytos, self-employed). In this respect, radicalisation and individual internal conflicts, further extending towards wider social conflicts, can be understood as an outcome of becoming unable within the political crisis, which resulted from the economic one, to imagine alternatives and change.

European conflicts: anti-Germanism and economic wars

Radicalising effects appeared to be spilling over to the European dimension of Greek identity. For example, the same participants who self-identified as 'extreme' left or right, expressed ideas of anti-Germanism, anti-Europeanism, and perceptions of European conflict. Grigoris (private sector employee), self-proclaimed 'extreme leftist', who voted for KKE and SYRIZA, and wanted exit from

EU, EMU and NATO, for instance, argued that within the world, 'Europe is the worst, because it has the Germans... Germany should be a plain field, this is my opinion of Europe, without Germany, Europe would be fine'. Grigoris concluded that Germans 'should either perish or do something about their politics'. When asked if he had the same views before the crisis, he responded that 'no, I didn't have the same views... my father used to tell me that I don't know the Germans. I'm beginning to learn them now, I hope I don't get to know them the way my father did' (Grigoris, private sector employee), implicitly referring to WWII and German occupation. The same participant stated that he was not European, because 'right now, Europe is Germany, and I'm not German. Clearly'.

Dimosthenis, who self-identified as 'extreme right' and voted for GD, shared the following regarding the compatibility between national and European identities.

'these will co-exist peacefully when the last German forgets about 1940 and the last Greek grandpa says 'Heil Hitler'... since there's blood between peoples, conflict, war, hatred... this cannot exist... you can't be brothers... and now you ended up at a point where it doesn't benefit any of you two, because you both believe that the other one has stolen from you... how can you be grouped under a united identity... while thinking what the Germans did to us during the war?'[...] it is the discord, the human nature, from the moment you hold on, bite, grab and breath through your conflicts, this is where it ends... basically, history is a vendetta, if you think about it. Have you ever heard about changes that didn't have the requirement of war, bloodshed and social outcry? The progress of humans is based on blood and bones... so let's face it, war takes us forward... as a species' (Dimosthenis, private sector employee)

In both these examples, references are made to WWII and the occupation of Greece by Germany and historical, as well as family, experiences are enacted to concrete dividing lines between the two countries. According to SRT, these negative associations and sentiments can be understood as part of the process of anchoring which ascribes meaning to new phenomena by cognitively linking them to existing knowledge and prior attitudes, or in other words, what individuals feel they already know. In this sense, for some citizens, the experience of the Euro crisis and Germany's leading role in its management, is associated with what one remembers to 'know' about Germans from his parents or history. Simultaneously, easily accessible and time defying derogatory national stereotypes regarding Germans appear to operate as a cognitive pool of information and attitude building

towards additional social objects, such as those of 'European identity' (i.e. 'Europe is Germany') or 'humanity' (i.e. 'the human nature'). As put by another participant, who did not endorse such stereotypes, yet recognised that European identities are currently going through the 'era of conflict', it is 'impressive' that 'after seventy years the stereotype of Germans is still the Nazis' (Gerasimos, public servant).

Although it would be logically plausible to assume that such negative associations were only made by participants who belonged to the fringes of the political spectrum, it would be erroneous. For instance, another participant with much more moderate political views similarly questioned 'how can we co-exist with the Germans, after everything they did all over Europe?' (Marina, public servant). This participant further explained that 'even if you don't think about this consciously, it exists in your subconscious... maybe this is me being narrow-minded, but I think it always exists in the subconscious, we can't be one because of history'. Most impressively, even a self-proclaimed federalist, expressed anti-German feelings. Neophytos (self-employed), for instance, explained that he still supports the EU, despite its 'monstrous flaws' because it has structures that Greece lacks and are necessary for future change, but then added 'not like this though, Troika-style, with our head under the boot of the German'. The emphasis of these participants on the role of Germany indicates the perception of it as dominant within the EU, while the qualitative character of these comments illustrates the depth of conflict in Greek citizens' European identity, whereby other Europeans are perceived in hostile and threatening ways.

In terms of other references to 'war' and 'conflict', besides the overt references to WWII, some participants used metaphors of war to speak about EU relations, resembling media representations described in previous chapters. For example, the metaphor of 'economic war' was used to describe current EU affairs. An unemployed young woman, Aggeliki, while discussing the crisis management by the Troika, stated that 'it is like an underground economic war, where they are winning'. Paulos (unemployed) observed that 'we've left the times of swords and bows and we've come to the times

of economic dominance, I control your liquidity, therefore I can do whatever I want with you'. Paulos further elaborated that there is no democracy within this condition which constitutes 'a form of violence' not in the sense of 'shooting an unarmed' but 'practically controlling if one will work or feed his child milk three times a week or not at all'. These participants were both made unemployed during the crisis, thus were highly affected by it, had never lived abroad, and expressed various self-described 'nationalist' views, such as 'we're not good nationalists anymore, to resist the fact that they subjugate us' (Aggeliki, unemployed). These features may explain their negative attitudes towards Europe.

However, interestingly, another participant who openly criticised 'nationalist' or 'patriotic' attitudes, was a diasporic returnee, and had found employment in Greece during the economic crisis, thus was not as affected as other citizens, similarly made use of the 'economic war' metaphor.

'it is known that Europe moves slowly with negotiations, but I would have expected greater speed in the decision-making and no half measures, they were very late with recapitalisation, they were late with the restructuring too, things were done, but at the beginning there was a murderous period for the Greek economy of grave uncertainty, where others didn't even want to come here as tourists, let alone invest in the country, this was very bad, the country found itself in a state of economic war, as they say...' (Laurentis, self-employed)

Although the EU/Europe is not directly blamed for the 'state of economic war', it is indirectly linked as a key factor in facilitating it and allusions are made to delayed and insufficient solidarity.

Other participants used the word 'threat' to describe Greece's relations to Europe. A young student who stated that she 'really like[d] the idea of European identity' and 'dreamed' of going abroad to Europe for further studies, could not tell 'if Greece should be in the EU anymore' and described the Troika's visitations as a time when 'the whole climate in Athens changes, they are here, they come from Europe, even this, that we are afraid that *they come from Europe* (speaker's emphasis), becomes negative for us, there are some people from the EU that threaten us...' (Kyriaki, student). The participant further added that 'I don't want them to come here, all this surveillance, this

controlling, seems to me somehow, like fascism'. The metaphor of 'fascism' here adds another representation of political violence, enacting conflict in a frequently used cognitive schema for the description of European affairs and Greece's relation with Europe.

Support for the EU: united in dependency

Besides representations of 'conflict', the greatest contradiction in terms of identifications was encountered in citizens' EU identities, expressed as overwhelmingly negative associations with the EU, yet a simultaneous overwhelming majority in favour of EU membership. In other words, although most participants did not feel represented or happy with the EU, most of them were not willing to leave it. In light of representations of European conflict, participants were asked to reflect on the process of European integration, which revealed a number of dominant narratives. These narratives dictated that European integration was 'a good idea in theory, but not in practice', or that it used to be 'positive before, but not anymore'. In many respects, participants expressed cognitive dissonance regarding what the EU used to mean before and what it meant to them after the economic crisis, or what they felt it was supposed to be, but was not, indicating a decline of positive attitudes and rise of negative ones. This appeared to be the case in citizens who used to be positively, neutrally and negatively inclined towards the EU before the crisis, affecting the whole spectrum of support. The particular object of contestation appeared to be that of the 'Troika'.

Neophytos (self-employed), for example, who repeatedly described himself as a 'federalist' commented 'what happens today has come out of our worst nightmares, any old federalist's worst nightmares'. Another self-proclaimed 'federalist' argued that she had not been affected in her views, however this only appeared possible based on a selective refusal to reflect on the Troika. As stated, 'this is indifferent to me, I have not concerned myself with this at all, I have no opinion' (Aphrodite, public servant). Nevertheless, as discussions progressed negative representations were indeed

expressed not only about the Troika itself, but also about Angela Merkel, negatively personifying European crisis responses.

Young citizens who 'didn't know about the EU before' (Aggelos, student), thus had no particular predisposition in advance, had formed 'negative views'. For example, Kyriaki (student) commented that 'all these with the EU were presented so beautifully at school, this vision of the EU', and added that this did not resonate with the experience of the Troika. Some participants who had been negative in the past, were 'even more [negative] now' (Krystallia, private sector employee). Altogether, there appeared to be a unified movement of all predispositions towards the negative side of the perceptive spectrum, with several participants thinking that current EU affairs were not characterised by support and solidarity, relations between member-states were unequal and based on national, rather than common interests, and unity between different countries was impossible due to insuperable differences.

At the same time, the overwhelming majority of participants did not wish to leave the EU. It was evident that there were four types of answers to the question of EU membership. These included a) unconditional support to remain, b) compromised support to remain, c) conditional support to remain, otherwise leave, and d) clear willingness to leave. The *first* type of response asserted that Greece had to stay inside the EU and leaving should not even be discussed as an option. The *second* argued that Greece should stay in the EU, despite the EU not being what citizens would like it to be. The *third*, reckoned that Greece should leave the EU, unless the EU changes, and the *fourth* declared that there was no reason to stay in the EU, because it does not serve Greece's interests.

The majority of this study's participants resided in the second type of response, while few participants populated the other response types. The key factors that seemed to inspire 'compromised remainers' were fear of the unknown, insecurity about further impoverishment, and sense of dependency on the EU. Arguments behind 'conditional remainers' included the EU

becoming more democratic, egalitarian and beneficial for ordinary people, rather than political and economic elites only. 'Unconditional leavers' talked about autonomy and independence, while 'unconditional remainers' referred to the mere impossibility of leaving the EU. The overall conclusion appeared to be that identification with the EU was founded on a profound conflict between what felt desirable, i.e. the EU being different, and what was deemed plausible, or not thereof, i.e. leaving it.

Identity devaluation: negotiations of stereotypes and collective responsibility

In previous chapters, it was explained that historiographical accounts of Greek European identities were marked by narratives and stereotypes that contributed to identity devaluation. These features included being presented as a non-prototypical European, thus a lesser ingroup member, and being undeserving. During the economic crisis, media representations constructed various negative metaphors and stereotypes of Greece, adding continuity to Greece's title of the 'black sheep' within the EU. Processes of culturalisation, moralisation and exceptionalisation were detected and amounted to Greece being presented as a 'bad European'. Demands for exclusion from the EU were present both before and after the crisis. Ideational leaders acknowledged that Greece had been stereotyped during the crisis, thus Greek European identity had experienced identity threats. While some emphasised the need to engage in a process of national reflection and acknowledgement of Greece's responsibility in creating its crisis, others focused on the framing purposes of these stereotypes and role in imposing austerity measures. The concept of collective responsibility, as well as other forms of responsibility, such as individual or bystander, were enacted into a dominant implicit or explicit representation, and were variably negotiated by participants, either as endorsed or allocated differentially between different political actors. This section will focus on the ways citizens responded to stereotypes and types of crisis responsibility.

Responses to stereotypes: emotions and rationalisations

Responses to stereotypes by citizens included two types: a) moderate and neutralising attitudes, aiming at pacifying the aforementioned European conflict and managing the inflicted identity threat, and b) more emotional and heated ones, leaving the representation of European conflict unchallenged and expressing the effects of identity threat.

In the first case, several participants commented that social characteristics, such as laziness, 'exist everywhere' (Aggelos, student; Charis, unemployed; Eleftheria, private sector employee), and stereotypes are wrong because they 'overgeneralise' (Kyriaki, student; Laurentis, self-employed; Vaggelis, self-employed) or 'exaggerate' (Rodanthi, student) and 'not all Greeks are like this' (Marina, public servant; Paulos, unemployed). These arguments can be understood as attempting to rebalance both the implied hostility among European nations and the threat posed on national self-esteem, by denationalising the associated social features. This psychological and argumentative tactic distanciates the threat from the collective identity, de-exceptionalises the nation, and depersonalises the debate. As such, neutralising representations contribute to the resolution of cognitive threats.

Others rationalised the situation arguing that 'all people engage in stereotyping' and further mentioned that 'Greeks stereotype other nationals too' (Aris, self-employed; Dionysis, public servant). While the first argument seeks to present stereotyping as a normal human behaviour, thus de-exceptionalises the reactions of other Europeans, the second argument emphasises mutuality and Greek participation, which further creates a representation of shared experience. In both cases, the debate is neutralised and pacified.

Many participants attempted to compartmentalise the creation of stereotypes by identifying the media as the primary actor (Kyveli, unemployed; Rodanthi, student; Vasiliki, public servant), a strategy which shifted responsibility from European societies as a whole. This tactic acted in a peace enhancing manner and transformed the impression of hostility emanating from Europe by situating

the conflict within a particular and separate social realm, perceived as traditionally operating in conflictual ways. Sometimes participants would further situate the problem of stereotyping in a segment of the media, i.e. tabloid newspapers (Dionysis, public servant), therefore further minimising the extent of the issue, which can be understood as an additional peace-making and identity threat management strategy.

Many talked about the ways that media representations have the power to shape people's perceptions of political issues and justified European citizens for believing in negative stereotypes by means of empathy, i.e. placing themselves in their places.

'...some [Europeans] had a negative image, and good for them. I would have too, if I was told that Bulgaria owed money because its politicians... got EU funds and did no development, or the farmers took funding to develop the asparagus, but ate all the money with Russian girls and whiskey, I too would say no to helping Bulgaria...'
(Aphrodite, public servant)

'it is absolutely justified, because when you live in a world where the media can shape your mind, I can't judge... it is the same as someone trying to persuade me that Albanians are animals, this can be done very easily... why should I characterise negatively the Swedish if his television tells him that the Greeks are unworthy? I won't, because just as easily I could do the same, there's a mechanism that accomplishes that, so I can't judge him' (Grigoris, private sector employee)

On the other side of the spectrum, the second type of responses included several emotional expressions, such as anger, sadness, shame, distrust, pride, indifference, and guilt. Beginning with anger, some participants explicitly stated that they felt angry at the formation of such stereotypes.

'the characterisation lazy caused me, causes me and will continue to cause me spleen, always, because many years before the crisis, me and my own field worked like crazy, and most of the Greeks I know work like crazy' (Neophytos, self-employed)

'in the media, many times I watched interviews and speeches, or saw titles in the international press, and I felt great anger and fury about the way they presented things, because this is not the way things are... it's not possible for someone who has never lived in Greece to know how everyday life is here. And then to go out like that and speak with such pomposity and certainty that things are a certain way, which is offensive' (Paulos, unemployed)

The feeling of anger was evident in both self-proclaimed 'nationalists' (i.e. Paulos) and 'Europeanists' (i.e. Neophytos).

Others felt sad and disappointed regarding the state of Greek European identity during the crisis and variably negotiated the identity threat resulting from stereotyping.

'I go crazy! Especially since it's not true... it affects you, because you know others, who are like you, who haven't done something stupid... and you feel bad, not guilty, maybe done wrong... no, you know what, I don't feel done wrong, because if anyone told me anything, like 'you are Greek', etc., I'd be able to answer them... it's just that you can't, no, it's not injustice, it is, I don't know how to characterise it, it's bad, it makes you feel sad...' (Kalliopi, unemployed)

'Personally, it makes me sad, it doesn't offend me, the fact that I am from this country, it just makes me sad, that's all, nothing else' (Krystallia, private sector employee)

Some participants openly declared that they experienced feelings of shame, and others observed that Greek society was collectively feeling ashamed or humiliated.

'I travel a lot for business and leisure, there were many times that I felt ashamed to say that I'm Greek, I didn't want to get into the whole procedure to have to explain why we are where we are, because this makes you feel ashamed somehow...' (Krystallia, private sector employee)

'the Greeks, we are not some different peoples, we're just a peoples that lives on earth. All peoples have their culture. What can I say? That I'm Greek and I'm proud? I want you to say it. Right now, I feel ashamed to be Greek, the way I've become, I would like to be something else, I don't know... what can I tell you, what could I be, I don't know, something else, not Greek' (Nestoras, pensioner)

Other participants expressed distrust towards these stereotypes and said that they were used for the service of various 'national interests' or 'political agendas', like imposing austerity (Aris, self-employed; Eleftheria, private sector employee; Kyriakos, student), an argument which closely resembled some ideational leaders' narrative of 'strategic framing'. In this sense, distrust was expressed for both Greek and European governments and media. However, the representation of strategic framing was less prominent in citizens' interviews.

Some respondents felt the need to state that they felt 'untouched' by such stereotypes and that they still felt proud to be Greek or confident in themselves.

'I think I'm saddened somehow, for sure a little bit, but beyond that, I think that everyone should know what they are and move forwards according to it, we don't have to prove anything to anybody' (Kyveli, unemployed)

'this doesn't touch me, I know how I am...' (Marina, public servant)

'Personally, I have not been affected to feel ashamed to be Greek, quite the contrary, I am always proud...' (Martha, public servant)

In these examples, self-awareness and pride are employed as mechanisms that safeguard personal self-esteem and restore the sovereignty of the individual self, distanced from the threat.

Finally, other participants projected the argument that they did 'not care' about 'such things', implying that they were unaffected by them. 'They came in one ear, and came out the other' (Aris, self-employed). However, during the interviews it would sometimes become apparent that some of these participants were affected at least to a degree, as was the case with Martha (public servant) who later during the interview admitted that stereotypes make her 'very sad', or Vaggelis (self-employed) who eventually commented that the stereotype of being lazy was 'so unacceptable, like a bad joke'. As such, the claim of indifference may better be understood as a psychological mechanism of 'saving face' and minimising the effect of identity threat, rather than eluding its experience altogether.

Some participants could recall personal experiences of having felt offended by other Europeans on the basis of such stereotypes or could remember hearing from friends that Greeks were treated with prejudice abroad. For example, a participant who had lived in another European country explained that he had an unpleasant experience when a Northern-European colleague sent an email to all staff members using the term PIGS to refer to Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain, in order to communicate on an otherwise irrelevant matter to the economic crisis. As narrated by the

participant, the email was soon followed by a complaint, made by an Irish colleague, as well as by the participant himself who stated that 'in Europe we are all together, there are businesses, employees and unemployed who suffer all over Europe, sticking a label on some and isolating them or viewing them as a joke does not help European progress or the peace and cooperation between the people of Europe' (Laurentis, self-employed).

The same participant explained that on other occasions, such as dining out with friends, some people had made jokes about Greeks, like 'we [Europeans] should pay for your meal' or 'bring us back our money'. The participant stated that he 'didn't like that at all' and that he always tried to 'explain that it is better to joke about less painful matters' because 'fat jokes' could lead to unnecessary 'misunderstandings'.

Another participant who had been on a seminar in a Northern-European country shared the following.

'they were quite ironic about Greece and what they expected to hear from us, while we were absolutely, you know, we were trying to keep to the schedule, to be there for the common hours, to do the specifics we needed to do, because, you know, that's what happens, it wasn't as if we were doing it on purpose because we were in a foreign country... other than that, yes, I'd say they were negative, ironic, they thought that we wouldn't stick to the programme... after a few days they told us how come we arrive on time, at nine, instead of eleven, because we're Greek. While in truth the opposite was happening, they were the ones who didn't respect the programme, while we were trying to be typical' (Kyveli, unemployed)

Krystallia (private sector employee) also observed that she had received 'a lot of irony and derision by foreign colleagues' about what was phrased as 'you Greeks'.

Simultaneously, several participants recalled stories of friends who had been confronted with what was perceived as 'racism' (Charalampos, unemployed) or 'uneasiness' (Stavros, self-employed). With reference to regions outside Europe, a participant with a global experience noted that older forms of

discrimination against Greeks and other Southern Europeans, such as the derogatory term 'wogs'³², had been revitalised in Australia (Kalliopi, unemployed).

Others emphasised that not all relations between Greeks and Europeans were negatively experienced, an argument that was sometimes illustrated by personal experiences and references to the participants' own friendships or acquaintances (Aphodite, public servant; Neophytos, self-employed). Several participants who were asked about personal experiences stated that they had not experienced any negative or positive encounters with other Europeans/non-Greeks and attributed this to not living or working abroad. As put, 'here in Greece, I am a Greek among Greeks' (Leonidas, pensioner). Absence of contact with other Europeans may have acted as a protective factor against the possibility of identity threat.

Moving on, some participants made strategic attempts to manage the particular identity threat objectified on the issue of 'laziness' by trying to rationalise and justify differences between what was perceived Northern and Southern 'ways of life' and 'work ethic', particularly specified as the relationship between the two objects of 'life' and 'work'. Two arguments that were projected here were that Greeks may work differently than others and have a culture of leisure which counterbalances the life/work relationship. For example, Charalampos (unemployed), argued that Greece has a better balance of work and life because 'people will go out in the night' while the 'Northerners think it's all about work'. Other participants justified this as a result of the 'good weather' which encourages leisure and sociability, as well as redistributes working hours outside the expected 'nine to five schedule' (Aristeidis, pensioner; Kalliopi, unemployed). Some defensively explained that environmental conditions, such as heat, can influence adversely one's productivity. 'At ten in the morning, we have forty degrees in Athens, the whole neurophysiology changes' (Kyveli, unemployed). Some concluded that Europeans should understand that life is different in the South.

³² Defined as a non-Anglo-Celtic European, esp. from Southern or Eastern Europe (e.g. Greek, Italian, Balkan, Slavic, etc.). Also, extended to include an Asian, esp. a West Asian (e.g. Lebanese, Turkish, Armenian, Iranian, etc.), but now also inclusive of South Asians and Pacific Islanders (Urbandictionary.com).

‘if the German or the Swedish, whoever, cannot understand that in a country with nine months of summer the employee will go to work in the morning, work, come back, have a nap, and then go out, or the self-employed will get up at twelve in the afternoon, have coffee and work till four in the morning... if they can’t understand this, they should try, I don’t know how else to put it... (Neophytos, self-employed).

Another participant argued that there is no such thing as a lazy person and explained that people who may appear lazy may be people who are doing jobs they do not like, therefore experience a lack of interest, rather than laziness (Gerasimos, public servant), or are underpaid (Charalampos, unemployed).

The meaning to gather from the above arguments is clearly not whether Greeks work enough or in the correct manner, but rather the notion that the perceived ‘culture of leisure and sociability’, suggested to be a national characteristic was associated with feelings of guilt, hence the projection of various defensive rationalisations and justifications, as well as strategic comparisons between North and South. Some participants contested these public feelings of guilt arguing that these feelings were deliberately cultivated by Greek leadership in order to curtail public resistance. For example, Eleftheria (private sector employee), referring to Pangalos’s statement ‘we ate it together’ stated the following:

‘this infuriated me, the same goes when I hear a fellow citizen supporting such opinions, I get angry, because I’m afraid that these views are domino... it’s easier to convince someone to be pessimistic, depressed and guilty, than to convince him to come with you and fight for something... collectively... even if they’re right, what am I going to do to prove them wrong? To prove that I’m not lazy or corrupted as they say? [...] I’m trying to allocate responsibility to each actor properly, because Pangalos was not blackmailed by anyone to make all these *rousfeti*... the citizens didn’t threaten politicians, like unless you give me a job, or hire me, or give me a *rousfeti*, I’ll kill you, nobody said that, the doors were wide open... the governing elites want to attribute the same amount of responsibility to the citizens, but for me this is not right. As much as I disagree with someone begging for a job and becoming slavish like that, I don’t think they share the same responsibility... all these accusations talk to our emotions, and we forget to use our rationality’ (Eleftheria, private sector employee)

As becomes apparent, the question of guilt inevitably invites the question of responsibility in its various types, as was discussed by ideational leaders. This example closely resembles

Karathanasopoulos's comments regarding the distribution of blame between citizens and elites. It further illustrates the degree of conflict between the two, whereby the creation of negative stereotypes, such as laziness and corruption, is situated within Greek society, rather than in Europe.

This is most obvious in the following example by a citizen who specifically personified this practice of blaming on George Papandreou, previous PM, as was done by some ideational leaders who argued that Papandreou's representation abroad gave negative impressions and license for such claims (Papadimitriou, Papakonstantinou).

'the same people who are supposed to be there to support me, to look after my well-being, are the same people who accuse me. My own people, the Greek politicians. They accuse me, they told me that I am a thief, Mr. Georgakis Papandreou, he told me that I'm disreputable, he told me that I'm... he killed me... and the foreigners came out and said that these are lies, Georgakis doesn't speak the truth... this person is allowed to be in politics, this person is free, if I said such things about politicians, I'd be in court... he told me I'm disreputable, that man who has destroyed Greece... what can I say, I'm just a family man... I have no laws, I have no doctor, I have nothing, we have nothing...'
(Nestoras, pensioner)

As is exemplified, feelings of anger are met with feelings of betrayal and injustice, which can be said to lead to feelings of bitterness, even resentment. The ultimate conclusion appears to be a profound sense of misrepresentation on behalf of the citizens, both politically, in policy-making, and symbolically, in terms of identity representation, domestically and abroad. These representations of guilt and blame relate to the next question of responsibility.

The question of collective responsibility

Several ideational leaders argued that in light of the economic crisis, Greek people needed to engage in national self-reflection and consider the ways Greek society contributed to the crisis. A dominant assumption appeared to be that Greek people do not reflect on this matter and blame external factors for the crisis, such as the EU, the Germans or the global capitalist system. The implicit or explicit assumption behind this was that Greek citizens avoid assuming responsibility in any form.

Similar assumptions and claims were made by some citizens too, across the spectrum of age, occupation, or ideology. For example, a pensioner, echoing Ramfos's comment that 'we need to be saved by our bad self', stated that 'I don't know how many can coolly see that there was uncovered this bad self that brought things where they are now' (Aristeidis, pensioner). A young self-employed citizen commented that 'even within the crisis, we didn't have the strength to acknowledge that we were wrong... and blame the Germans' (Nikiforos, self-employed), resounding Tsoukalis's comment 'how many Greeks accept that we suffer because our country was a mess, and not because of Merkel's fault?'.

Contrary to this view, it was revealed that Greek citizens in this study intensely engaged in processes of national self-reflection regarding identity, responsibility and crisis and largely accepted that the roots for the economic crisis were located within Greek society.

'Us Greeks are responsible [for the crisis], who else could it be? [...] our attitude needs to change, I'm a bit harsh on that, but I have thought about this *a lot* [emphasis], and have discussed it with many people' (Kyveli, unemployed)

'I'm very touched by European identity, I studied it at university, I have an interest... national identity as well... I'm stunned [by] what's happening in Greece... there are people who, within the crisis, instead of thinking what us Greeks have done, instead of lowering this [national identity], they have raised it... what it means to be Greek after all, gets confused...' (Kyriaki, student)

As indicated, citizens expressed acceptance of Greek responsibility, as well as concern regarding the state of national reflection across society. Traces of personal and collective self-reflection were present within participants' recollection of how their views changed over the course of the economic crisis. This profound influence appeared to be present both within individuals who belonged to highly blamed social groups, such as older generations and public servants, as well as those who did not belong to these groups, such as the young and unemployed.

'Few people could realise... me, for instance, I only now learn about many things, I thought I lived in a dream! Back then, they'd talk about many things, salaries, etc., I must have lived in a dream, I didn't see, or maybe I did, but my mind never related, I never thought that we'd get to that point... the unionists who made demands... how did it all

go down like that? Were we that stupid? But everybody was on the same trip... or the teachers who made demands, everybody was in the same climate... what did you ask me, I forgot the question...' (Aphrodite, public servant)

'At the beginning, as a Greek, because I didn't want to accept these [stereotypes], I took it very patriotically. I didn't want to accept that this is the case. But as time went by, I observed that people don't stand up, to prove that we are not what they say. I saw this happening, so there's nothing you can say, there's no riposte, you have no evidence to prove that this is not the case...' (Aggeliki, unemployed)

As illustrated, citizens from diverse generations and socio-economic backgrounds are joined together within the paradoxical social cohesion of national reflection and responsibility bearing. Several participants additionally appeared to promote the argument that the economic crisis should constitute an opportunity for national self-reflection, as was projected by ideational leaders.

'maybe this political sepsis is something that will awaken people and make new generations act more vigorously and meritocratically in the future, so that this regime can change for good...' (Paulos, unemployed)

'I want to believe that the crisis may lead to a degree of self-knowledge, especially for those who think more *diaplekomena*³³... I want to believe that the new generation is more aware than the ones before, view things on the proper basis, don't think about the *volema*³⁴...' (Rodanthi, student)

'this is a good chance, this thing we live through, to make some people think about some things...' (Grigoris, private sector employee)

As it becomes observable, these representations further relate the question of responsibility to that of gradual cultural change and the 'new generation' is identified as the primary intermediary of social change.

As explained in the previous chapter, some ideational leaders differentiated between those who reflect and those who do not. The same dual distinction was made by citizens themselves, implying

³³ *Diaplekomena* can be translated as 'intertwined interests', in this context i.e. between politicians and citizens or between business and politics.

³⁴ *Volema* translates as 'getting comfortable', in this conversation i.e. comfortable working in the public service.

that more segments of the society should engage in reflection or that reflection is currently insufficient, therefore should be increased.

‘some of us recognise our flaws... our part of responsibility, but there are some who don’t recognise any part of responsibility for themselves, and always blame the governments or the Europeans... we’re divided in two categories...’ (Marina, public servant)

‘Some intensified their national identity... [but] some were able to look beyond exaggerations and see what it means to be Greek... what is our position within the world and within Europe? What can we contribute?’ (Neophytos, self-employed)

In these respects, collective responsibility was largely accepted by citizens, which contradicts ideational leaders’ assumptions that national self-reflection is missing and people avoid it. As such, ideational leaders and citizens appear to agree on the necessity of national self-reflection and acknowledgement of Greek culpability in the economic crisis.

Furthermore, citizens appear to engage with the different types of responsibility described by ideational leaders, including the collective, which was illustrated extensively by the above examples, but also individual, bystander’s and shared/mutual with the EU. Individual responsibility was emphasised by some participants who thought that citizens should focus on what they do or can do as individuals (Dionysis, public servant; Gerasimos, public servant; Paulos, unemployed). Bystander’s responsibility was discussed by some participants who thought that citizens in the past understood that there were issues of corruption in Greek society, but did nothing to stop them (Kyriakos, student), for example, by reporting wrongdoers (Paulos, unemployed), or others who argued that in the context of the crisis, citizens should be politically more active (Eleftheria, private sector employee; Gerasimos, public servant). To some degree, the EU was attributed some part of shared responsibility for not exercising sufficient economic control prior to the crisis (Charalampos, unemployed; Eleftheria, private sector employee), an argument which was made by some ideational leaders too. A few young participants wondered why the EU had authorised the accession of a

country that had well-known problems and could not fulfil various criteria, including those for Eurozone membership.

Overall, the dominant outlook of citizens was national and responsibility was discussed in national terms. This was exemplified by the small number of participants who referred to the global financial crisis as a factor in the Greek crisis. Surprisingly, only one individual (Kyriakos, student) referred to factors of the systemic metanarrative, such as Eurozone membership and extended imports. As such, this crisis metanarrative projected by media and scholarly discourse was not particularly used by this study's participants. The main emphasis appeared to be citizens' focus on the degrees of responsibility distributed between Greek elites and Greek citizens. In this respect, while participants largely accepted that fault for the economic crisis was located in Greek society, the majority argued that the primary fault belonged to Greek politicians and to a secondary degree to Greek citizens themselves. Although this was mentioned by some of the ideational leaders, it was a more prominent feature in citizens' interviews. In terms of gradation of blame attribution, some participants did not specify degrees between citizens and elites, implying that responsibility may be equally distributed, while others speculated that it may be the citizens who are mostly responsible. The following examples, derived from conversations regarding the crisis causes, illustrate these claims.

'Mismanagement, primarily by the political leadership, and then by the Greek people'
(Rodanthi, student)

'First of all, I believe that it is both the citizens' and the politicians' fault... the politicians because they generously gave wealth to the people, and the people because they were greedy, they accepted that wealth, and didn't handle it well...'
(Charis, unemployed)

'I will not blame our politicians only, and the way they governed the country, who share large part of the responsibility, but our own selves too, who, yes, we had gotten out of control a little bit, our budget, of all of us, was beyond, what we spent was beyond the real budget... we had a false impression of capabilities, economic capabilities, us, the citizens, and as an extension our country...'
(Martha, public servant)

‘[politicians] are a miniature of the society, aren’t they?... it is our fault mostly, mostly the citizens’ fault, if we didn’t vote for them, they wouldn’t do these things, although I guess they would discover ways...’ (Stavros, self-employed)

Politicians were held responsible for acting on the basis of private interests (Aggelos, student), having the wrong attitude (Aphrodite, public servant), appropriating or stealing public funds (Charalampos, unemployed; Dionysis, public servant; Krystallia, private sector employee), practicing clientelistic relations (Eleftheria, private sector employee; Kyveli, unemployed; Laurentis, self-employed), failing to explain problems to the people (Gerasimos, public servant), misguiding the public (Kyriaki, student; Laurentis, self-employed), designing ineffective economic policy (Kyriakos, student), failing to investigate the practices of farmers, funded by the EU (Eleftheria, private sector employee; Nestoras, pensioner), being corrupted (Marina, public servant; Neophytos, self-employed; Rodanthi, student), and mismanaging economic and political governance (Martha, public servant; Vaggelis, self-employed). The most prominent indictments were corruption, clientelism and embezzlement of public funds.

In correspondence, citizens were attributed responsibility for voting for these politicians (Alkiviadis, pensioner; Eleftheria, private sector employee; Kyriaki, student), having the wrong attitude/values (Aphrodite, public servant; Marina, public servant; Nikiforos, self-employed), misappropriating EU funds, especially the farmers (Charalampos, unemployed; Krystallia, private sector employee), stealing public funds (Dionysis, public servant), tax-evading (Nikiforos, self-employed), choosing to work in the public sector (Gerasimos, public servant), failing to suggest solutions (Gerasimos, public servant), having insufficient education (Gerasimos, public servant; Marina, public servant), aiming to become comfortable (Krystallia, private sector employee), being docile/inactive (Eleftheria, private sector employee; Krystallia, private sector employee; Marina, public servant), being easily manipulated (Kyriaki, student; Laurentis, self-employed; Vaggelis, self-employed), accepting clientelistic relations (Kyveli, unemployed; Nestoras; pensioner; Stavros, self-employed), overspending (Martha, public servant; Paulos, unemployed), being unrealistic (Laurentis, self-

employed; Martha, public servant), borrowing (Martha, public servant), and acting lawlessly (Nikiforos, self-employed). The primary arraignment was by far voting, followed by wrong attitude/values, insufficient education, being docile, being easily manipulated, and accepting clientelistic relations. As shown, compared to the number of accusations against politicians, dominant accusations against citizens were more plentiful.

Exceptional Greece?

While culturalisation was discussed with reference to negative cultural stereotypes and moralisation with regards to questions of responsibility, exceptionalisation appeared to be more puzzling for participants. As put by Nikiforos (self-employed), 'what could we have that makes us exceptional?'. Compared to ideational leaders' interviews, there appeared to be much less awareness of such representational patterns in citizens' interviews, and only one participant mentioned that Greece was presented as an 'exceptional case' by other Southern-European governments and media, which he attributed to them trying to avoid implementing policy reforms in their own countries (Laurentis, self-employed). Upon speculation, some were undecided on this matter of exceptionalism (i.e. Aprhodite, public servant; Vasiliki, public servant), others mentioned that they were not knowledgeable enough of other countries to make comparisons (i.e. Aggeliki, unemployed; Kyveli, unemployed), and some suggested that all countries are culturally special (i.e. Rodanthi, student; Tasoula, private sector employee).

Among those who accepted Greek exceptionalism, it was argued that the difference between Greece and other countries economically was that Greece did not have a substantial productive base (Aggelos, student; Gerasimos, public servant), had multiple problems simultaneously, while other countries had fewer problems (Charis, unemployed), and had particular institutional and structural issues (Dionysis, public servant; Eleftheria, private sector employee). Some attributed these peculiarities to the historical past, i.e. Ottoman and Balkan heritages (Gerasimos, public servant;

Stavros, self-employed). Few asserted that Greece was special only in terms of being the crisis's first 'guinea pig' in terms of crisis management, making use of this media metaphor (Aris, self-employed; Chrysanthos, private sector employee).

On behalf of those who rejected the idea of Greek exceptionalism, it was argued that debt is not exceptional, as many countries have debts (Chrysanthos, private sector employee), and corruption and institutional malfunctions exist everywhere (Eleftheria, private sector employee; Neophytos, self-employed). The latter view was explained further by saying that the peculiarity in Greece's problems of corruption was that such lawless practices were subjected to legal punishment elsewhere, but not in Greece, a feature which made these problems more intense and intractable in the case of Greece. Many thought that Greece was not exceptional, because it held many similarities with the other Southern-European countries, most notably Italy (Kalliopi, unemployed; Paulos, unemployed).

Finally, there were some participants who resituated the debate of Greece's exceptionalism within Greek society, arguing that 'we think we are special, but we are not' (Kalliopi, unemployed), inferring that many countries have various issues and Greece's difficulties are not peculiar. Kyriaki (student) speculated that 'it is us who allowed others to see us as a special case', suggesting that chronic problems, as well as unsuccessful representation by Greek politicians in foreign policy have played an adverse role in such exceptionalising representations.

Identity overvaluation: limited overvaluation strategies and returns to devaluation

In previous chapters, it was explained that Greece's identity was overvalued on the basis of its ancient tradition, while during the crisis several positive stereotypes were created, such as those of the victim, the rebel, the regime changer and the underdog. Ideational leaders' interviews revealed limited use of these re-evaluating narratives and few strategies of identity overvaluation, such as hierarchisation, positive exceptionalisation, relational or antagonistic narcissism. Furthermore,

ideational leaders assumed that Greek society largely engages with overvaluation and openly expressed criticism against the process of identity overvaluation. Within citizens' interviews similar patterns were observed. There were few attempts to strategically re-evaluate Greek identity as a response to negative stereotypes, exhibiting traces of defensive narcissism. Moreover, similar criticisms were made regarding identity overvaluation and positive crisis stereotypes were largely unused. Altogether, these dynamics showed that identity overvaluation was a less prominent feature within the data compared to identity devaluation. The following section will explain further.

Re-evaluation strategies: re-turning to Ulysses and Zorbas

Regarding negative stereotypes, some participants responded to questions of work ethic by projecting strategic arguments about the differences between Greek and European work ethics. In this respect, some participants, who had worked with other Europeans, believed that Greeks had positive attributes, such as resourcefulness and problem-solving skills that other nationals did not have to the same extent.

'Looking at my professional life, I worked a lot with Italians, English and French people. All of them, except the Italians... thought we were lazy and disorganised, so they tried to fix us... my own opinion was that they were inflexible, norm-obsessed, not at all productive, they maintained their own day schedule... their eight hours were their eight hours... while our work extended over our eight hours... a hypocritical situation, like I'm the well-organised one, who is someone... this is not about the crisis, but about how peoples organise their time and work... we are capable of finding solutions where there aren't, I could see that these people when they hit a wall, they'd stay at the wall. Nobody would look for alternative ways around it. This is something that even the silliest of us has it, he'll find it somehow...' (Aristeidis, pensioner)

'maybe because we never lived in an organised country and the government won't help us... we have some social skills that Northern-Europeans don't have as much, they have them, but not as developed... if there's a problem, for example, in Sweden I've seen it, if the work doesn't progress, they lose it... the Greek has developed a different sense for things, he is... not resourceful, but he'll find a way, maybe it's not lawful, but maybe it is, or maybe it's just a way that someone who's accustomed to ready-made protocols hasn't thought of... yes, maybe resourceful, finding things...' (Kalliopi, unemployed)

As exemplified in these similar examples, by means of social comparison, as proclaimed by SIT, participants were able to establish self-esteem resources and manage the inflicted identity threat and devaluation derived from negative stereotypes. In this sense, unflattering ideas of laziness were juxtaposed with positive attributes of resourcefulness and problem-solving. We could understand this strategy as a form of *defensive narcissism*, an identity overvaluation achieved in the defence of the scraped collective self-esteem. Furthermore, we could note that these two particular attributes constitute reference points to the character of Odysseus (Ulysses) from Homer's ancient Greek epic poem, *Odyssey*. Correspondingly, tactics of re-evaluation and over-valuation appear to be anchored on previously well-known and established positive self-stereotypes, found in Greek culture.

When participants were asked to discuss what they viewed as positive Greek characteristics, the most widely shared representation was that of the 'good culture of entertainment'. Most participants argued that 'we know how to live' and 'have fun' (i.e. Aristeidis, pensioner; Karolos, student; Stavros, self-employed) and on occasion, compared Greek culture of entertainment with that of Europe and commented that 'this is why Europeans are jealous of us' (i.e. Martha, public servant). Some speculated that Europeans probably hate the fact that Greeks are able to 'have fun' even during the economic crisis. A participant reactively commented the following:

'I love the fact that the Greek will return home, will open the bill, it will be 800 euros, he'll be two rents behind, he'll open five more bills, and in the weekend, he'll take his girlfriend and go on an excursion. I love this very much, I love it... this is a badass reaction. And all these people who say 'oh, look at that, there's a crisis, and all the people go out'... the people do very well to go out, what are they supposed to do? Stay home and die?... it bothers them, especially the Germans, to see Greek people go out...' (Grigoris, private sector employee)

As seen in this example, the participant is referring to media representations of the 'remorseful partying Greeks', which were presented in chapter four, and strategically re-evaluates Greek identity in what could be labelled *reactionary narcissism*, the projection of positive self-attributes as a reaction to perceived identity threat. Similarly to the previous strategy, we can note that this representation of the 'joy of life' might be drawing its inspiration from the well-known, thus easily

accessible, positive national self-stereotype of *Zorbas the Greek*, the joyful character of Nikos Kazantzakis.

Farewell to the ancients?

With reference to the question of ancient Greece, the first observable finding was the absence of references to its venerable tradition, which indicates that Greek citizens may not largely seek to found collective identity distinction on it, as largely assumed by ideational leaders. Only few participants referred to ancient Greece in a positive manner. Furthermore, it was also obvious that some felt that establishing collective self-esteem on this tradition was a futile attempt and rejected the notion.

'I can't look at this like that, we have a big history and so on, but I don't think this has anything to do with us, how we used to be back then, this is something separate, I can't tell you that we should be proud or something, it was something that existed a long time ago, and that's all...' (Aggelos, student)

'[Education] should be less ethnocentric, and more realistic, right? Because, maybe we created democracy, or maybe Alexander the Great went as far as China or wherever, but this doesn't help right now, the point is what helps us now, what can help us become better as a peoples, what help us help our country, right?' (Vaggelis, self-employed)

In addition, similarly to ideational leaders' arguments, several citizens assumed that Greek society is largely engaging with such an overvaluation and argued against overvaluing Greek identity on the basis of Hellenism and Philhellenism or on the idea of being the 'chosen people'.

'we still say that we gave the lights of civilisation, that the Germans are wrong on this or that, that we are the descendants of the ancient Greeks, which we aren't, so I think that arrogance is the only thing the Greek sees within the crisis, to dispense himself of his own political choices, so he can say that some evil European or Turkish neighbour is coming to take away his land because it's a great piece of land... we are holy and good and blessed by God... exploited by politicians and foreigners... which I don't believe' (Nikiforos, self-employed)

'I'm very differentiated from what I see socially, that we are these victims of the Germans... I can't demand any solidarity, not even from my brother, let alone a country, and a strong

country no less... so this image that we are the targeted nation, done wrong and brotherless... we are the mistreated peoples, yet the chosen ones, the worthy ones, those who should receive adoration because 3,000 years ago some people said or wrote some things... I disagree with this' (Gerasimos, public servant)

As indicated, this critical assumption was additionally related to questions of responsibility and national reflection, whereby Greek citizens are presented as trying to avoid culpability by blaming external factors, such as the Germans, and becoming overtly nationalist by expressing overvaluing attitudes, i.e. 'arrogance' or 'adoration-seeking' based on glories of the past. Moreover, these arguments appear to relate to representations of conspiracy theories, which are also seen critically.

Conspiracy theories: criticisms and endorsements

As explained in the previous chapter, conspiracy theories can be understood as part of representations of victimhood, which as an extension relates to one of the basic identity representations of Greece during the crisis, namely that of the 'victim'. Within citizens' interviews notions of conspiracy and victimhood were variably represented, forming two main narratives. According to the *first*, several participants argued that there were foreign vested interests that aimed at exploiting Greece by buying out important public assets and natural resources, such as islands, energy or airports. Based on the *second*, in contrast, an equal number of participants contested what they viewed as 'victim mentality' and argued that Greek citizens should stop projecting such conspirational representations.

In terms of the first set of representations, some argued the following:

'the *mpampoules* of the EU, that's what it looks like to me... they're trying to squeeze us, which is what they've been doing all these years, buying away ports, airports, little by little, and now the Troika is ordering around the PM of each country... they put us in the Euro so they could dominate us even better, and squeeze us out of all we have, oil, islands, everything...' (Charalampos, unemployed)

‘I think they want to get inside our resources, because we have many resources which we don’t appropriate properly, natural gas, oil... so they want to control everything... the outsiders, the Troika, all of them, we are in a strategic position too, so this is not all for our own good! They’re here to take their money back and everything else they can take from us’ (Martha, public servant)

‘The EU was only beneficial for Greece in appearances, all these funds we received... were the long-term plan we never understood before ... they gave us [funds] for the streets, the bridges, etc., and we were happy that the Europeans loved us like that, but when someone lends you money... they’ll do it in such a way as to exploit you, this is what they did to us. I wouldn’t say that all Europeans are like this, but the EU is like this. They did it like that because they knew they would exploit everything that’s ours, and take our airports, our islands, everything...’ (Krystallia, private sector employee)

As it becomes apparent, the actor who is identified as responsible for what is termed as ‘exploitation’ is the EU and its derivative schema, the Troika. In these representations, Greece is presented as an exploited and exploitable entity that is abundant in resources that external actors wish to take away. Simultaneously, these aims are presented as rooted in the past, therefore elements of scheming and prior preparation are alluded, which contributes to the conspiratorial narrative. In terms of identity overvaluation, such narratives are able to achieve collective self-esteem by means of presenting the country as a rich and fecund entity, full of resources, which makes it appear desirable, therefore valued. Furthermore, they can be understood as responses to media representations that encouraged Greece to sell its islands and monuments to repay its debt, which were presented in chapter four.

In contrast, many participants spoke against conspiracy theories and representations of Greece as the ‘victim’. For example, Aristeidis (pensioner) criticised the ‘voices’ of a ‘wounded nation’ that thinks that ‘everybody is against us’, Dionysis (public servant) disclaimed that ‘everybody is after us’ and Kalliopi (unemployed) disagreed with the view that focuses on ‘what external powers are doing to us’. The objection to conspiratorial thinking appears to relate once again to questions of responsibility and national reflection. As put, ‘we look at ourselves like victims, and we shouldn’t, because it’s time to pay for what we did and accept this’ (Stavros, self-employed).

Positive crisis stereotypes?

In terms of positive stereotypes of victimhood, it was apparent that this was not seen as an identity opportunity to dispense responsibility or elicit solidarity and sympathy, but was rather seen as a route to losing collective dignity. Kalliopi (unemployed), for example, explained how insulted she felt when a non-Greek asked her whether ‘Greeks sell their organs’, while Grigoris (private sector employee) expressed anger towards being asked by a European whether ‘Greeks eat dogs’. As such, representations of ‘humanitarian crisis’ and assumptions of what crisis-stricken people might need to do in order to survive were seen as insulting and devastating to the collective self-esteem, rather than a victim identity with positive merits, as was presented by some crisis media. Dimosthenis (private sector employee) argued that the media were responsible for projecting not only an image of a ‘broken nation’, but also of a citizen as a ‘chamalis’ (χαμάλης)³⁵, a devaluating identity, which aimed at ‘depriving you of your dignity’. Finally, Martha (public servant) maintained the following:

‘I think that the image that exists abroad, and I fear that we’re the ones that created this, since beyond the crisis, it’s also about the way we deal with this situation, I think we have created this image of a nation that is miserable, trying to stand on its feet... on the other hand, one can see a dignified effort by the people... everybody has a crisis, we’re not special... it’s just the way that we project this abroad, this is somehow wrong... [in contrast] I don’t mind hearing that it’s a difficult time, but people are trying to stand on their feet, that’s honourable...’ (Martha, public servant)

As such, it can be understood that several people had an impression of the media and Greek society projecting images of Greek victimhood, which they deemed ‘undignified’, thus devaluating, rather than overvaluing, or even revaluating. In this sense, the more conventional understanding of the ‘victim identity’ as devaluating and detrimental to self-esteem was more prevalent, rather than its alternative dynamic as overvaluing.

³⁵ ‘Chamalis’ translates as a ‘coolie’, ‘dogsbody’ or ‘heaver’ and stands for someone who does the hard work for low payment (Wordreference.com), culturally seen as a humiliated figure due to extreme exploitation.

For others, a source of dignity loss was what was perceived as limited public resistance to austerity measures and foreign imposition. As put, 'we don't have the dignity of our ancestors to resist to being dominated' (Aggeliki, unemployed). In terms of media representations of Greece as a 'rebel', there was absence of such awareness or endorsement within the data and citizens did not appear to entertain such notions. In contrast, the few that touched upon the question of resistance or rebellion complained that these are insufficient in Greece during the economic crisis (i.e. Aristeidis, pensioner; Eleftheria, private sector employee; Nestoras, pensioner). Furthermore, the same participants expressed disappointment with the Indignants' movement for not being able to deliver radical political change. As such, as far as the positive identity stereotype of the 'rebel against the EU' goes, citizens did not draw from this representational resource when it came to questions of resistance.

Quite the opposite, it was evident that ideas of Greece being a 'rebel' were laughable given the precarious state of the country. As put, 'imagine leaving the EU, and what would that make us? The Greeks who revolted! Great!' (Kalliopi, unemployed). Interestingly, citizens drew from disease metaphors to speak of resistance during the crisis, albeit not the disease metaphors that were prominent within the crisis media. Instead, participants talked about Greek society experiencing a 'psychological trauma' that transforms citizens into 'docile beings' (Vaggelis, self-employed) or symptoms of 'post-traumatic stress disorder' that obstruct agonism and social change (Eleftheria, private sector employee). In this respect, one participant even suggested that 'one thing I can't understand: how come we haven't revolted yet, this is something to research, in your research too, something for the psychologists to research, to explore what's happening...' (Nestoras, pensioner).

As such, similarly to the 'victim' representation, the 'rebel' and the struggling small 'underdog' against the powerful EU, were not retrieved as identity resources for the creation of positive self-esteem. Instead, one could speak of a wider feeling of defeat and dissolution. Regarding the representation of the 'regime changer' at the European level, either as a democratic agent or a

nationalist one, participants appeared to be equally unaware or such representations, as well as uninterested in them. The idea of regime change was only discussed with reference to the national context and the notion of Greece overcoming its internal problems. This could be attributed to the perception of Greece's diminished power within the EU, and as an extension diminished sense of political efficacy, or the greater proximity of national issues compared to EU-related ones. Nevertheless, these indications of absences of alternative identities within the crisis may provoke questions of identity deficit, which is what the next section shall examine.

Identity deficit: not feeling European at the (dead-)end

In previous chapters, there were several historiographical representations that constructed Greece as non-European, thus as experiencing a European identity deficit, from the idea of Greece as a mere Western product, rendering Greek identity elusive, to the loneliness and lack of belonging of hybrid and 'exceptional' entities. In media representations, sovereignty loss was represented as a loss of Greece's international identity, while Grexit was interpreted as a means of losing its European identity. Notoriety was additionally understood as an identity emptying. Comparable representations of identity deficits were limited in ideational leaders' interviews and the most vivid sense of identity deficit was encountered in Greece's absence of identity choices, other than the European. Sovereignty was contested in ideational leaders' interviews, but was not presented as an identity loss.

In citizens' interviews, similar representations of identity deficits as those identified in previous chapters, were not present. Although this could be interpreted as a mere absence of such patterns, careful analysis revealed that citizens' identity deficits were present at other registers. These were the identification of one's self as European and a wider sense of 'deadend perception' regarding Greece's future identity. The remaining section will elaborate on these themes.

Feeling European?

Although there were no identity deficit representations by citizens, the biggest identity deficit that was observed was citizens' inability or unwillingness to feel European, regardless of the fact that most participants supported Greece's EU and Eurozone memberships. There were two kinds of European identification, *strong* and *weak*. While the first type was expressed unambiguously and offered clear arguments for its justification, the second type was more uncertain or entailed participants' explicit clarification that identification was weak for various reasons. Less than one third of the participants identified strongly as European, while a few identified weakly as European. Within the first group, justifications included having more commonalities with other Europeans as compared to North-Americans or Asians (i.e. Aristeidis, pensioner; Karolos, student), sharing European experiences, such as free movement and education (i.e. Charis, unemployed; Dionysis, public servant), being happy with political representation within the EU by MEPs (i.e. Laurentis, self-employed; Rodanthi, student), and belonging to the EU by means of EU and Eurozone membership (i.e. Martha, public servant).

In the second group, some participants categorised themselves as European only on geographical grounds, rather than political or cultural (i.e. Aris, self-employed) or on the basis of 'random chance' (i.e. Kalliopi, unemployed). Others spoke of European identity as something they would like to feel more in the future, but did not feel fully yet, due to Greece's structural problems (i.e. Eleftheria, private sector employee). Some mentioned that European identity was dependent on social comparison with other people. As put, 'if you compare me with third world countries, yes, I feel European, but if you compare with European countries, no, I don't feel European' (Stavros, self-employed). This last view reproduces the pattern of hierarchisation, which was observed previously, whereby European identities are seen in a hierarchical way. In this respect, it was observed by another participant that 'we are a bit racist towards anything non-European, while anything European we view it as superior to us, secretly without admitting it...' (Nikiforos, self-employed).

Furthermore, it resonates with SIT's assumptions that all identity is highly relational and comparative.

The majority of the participants did not identify as Europeans. There were four types of arguments projected for not feeling European: a) not having certain experiences that were seen as facilitating factors, b) preferring another identity, c) having negative views of the EU, and d) simply not feeling European. According to the first, some participants explained that they had not travelled abroad, therefore could not feel European (i.e. Aggeliki, unemployed; Alkiviadis, pensioner), while others argued that they did not have a European level of public services and living standards in Greece, which made them feel less European (i.e. Marina, public servant; Nikiforos, self-employed). In terms of the second, there were three identities that participants opted for, instead of the European, which included the national, cosmopolitan and human identity. The national identity was claimed over European identity, regardless of views towards the EU, with both anti-EU (i.e. Krystallia, private sector employee) and pro-EU (i.e. Vlassis, student) participants making this choice. The cosmopolitan identity was preferred by several participants and at many occasions this appeared to relate to the idea of a human identity. Furthermore, the cosmopolitan identity would sometimes include the European, but not always, depending of the perceived compatibility between the two.

'World peace is what I say! Why can't we have friends from Afghanistan? Aren't we all humans? What am I supposed to say that I'm European, and you are not European, therefore you're not human or have no human rights? This cannot be' (Aggeliki, unemployed)

'No, no, not European, what can I tell you, I'm a child of the world, yes...' (Aggelos, student)

'personally, I'm very happy for everything I have in common with other people, not only of Europe, with other people too, humans are the same everywhere, we are universal and timeless... [national identities] don't mean anything to me, because I am an internationalist, humans are humans...' (Aphrodite, public servant)

'Generally, we should feel like citizens of the world, I don't feel Greek only, or European only, I belong to the whole world... If I were to be locked inside Greece or

inside Europe only, I wouldn't feel interested in what's happening in America, or I wouldn't be interested in all these wars that are happening on this world... we should think more cosmopolitically...' (Kyriaki, student)

In terms of the third type of arguments against European identity, related to negative views against the EU, it was apparent that participants associated the cognitive schema of 'Europe' with that of the 'EU'. In this category, participants were either unhappy with the EU's crisis management and the Troika (i.e. Aggeliki, unemployed; Charalampos, unemployed), believed that the EU was overtly Germanified (i.e. Grigoris, private sector employee), or were widely unhappy with political representation within the EU (i.e. Kyriakos, student). All the participants within this category were either young and unemployed, thus heavily affected by the economic crisis, or belonged to the radical left, thus ideology and crisis influence may have played a role in their views. In the last category, some participants simply stated that they just did not feel European and this was a description that they would not use to describe themselves (i.e. Chrysanthos, private sector employee; Tasoula, private sector employee). Participants in this category did not exhibit strong emotions for any identity, including the Greek one.

Standing at the dead-end

As mentioned earlier, there was a wider sense of identity deficit which existed mostly in the words that were not said or the opinions that were not expressed. These absences related to Greece's future identity and trajectory. Participants did not refer to any relevant representations and there appeared to be no particular horizon or vision. Furthermore, several expressions which were used by participants indicated the existence of a 'dead-end' mentality, whether this referred to Greece's limitations of choices, inside or outside the EU, people's powerlessness to change and impact politics, or the fleeting effects of the Indignados movement.

Simultaneously, requests to return to central questions of direction and aim, specification of desires and goals, were sometimes aired, along with the inability to provide answers to these burning issues.

Traces of the need to define a society's wishes and a polity's plan were implied through the interviews. As such, perhaps a latent and intriguing identity deficit could be located in the absence of representations regarding the future, rather than the past, and the non-existence of a new ideology and stratagem for Greece's identity.

Summary and conclusion

This chapter aimed at presenting the results of interviews conducted with Greek citizens in an attempt to compare expert and non-expert representations and to establish the states of Greek European identities during the crisis. It started by providing an overview of Greek public attitudes towards the EU, outlined chronologically so that the evolution of Greek public opinion could be illustrated before and after the crisis. The picture painted by this overview tells the story of an ambivalent and negative start within the EC, which mellowed down over time to embrace the European unifying purpose, most probably on the basis of perceived benefits. Favourable Greek public opinion was maintained until the mid-two-thousands, after which Eurosceptic tendencies made their appearance. After the start of the economic crisis, most indicators were negative, with support for the EU decreasing dramatically, yet support for the Euro increasing. It was subsequently argued that these past surveys offered a valuable image of aggregate and long-term patterns, but could not decipher the particularities of national European identities. In this respect, the results of the present study were presented.

There was evidence that Greek citizens make reference to the East and West division of Greek society, albeit not to the same extent as ideational leaders do, and acknowledge the hybrid nature of Greek identity. There were several indications that some participants viewed Eastern elements unfavourably and reproduced Orientalist notions, as well as Balkanist attitudes, which in effect constructed parts of Greek identity as problematic, reproducing the idea of 'hybridity as a problem'. Others viewed this hybridity as a cultural enrichment and something that needed to be accepted and

included in the European prototype. Hybridity was also viewed as a selective one, in a similar manner presented by ideational leaders. Similarly to the ideational leaders, citizens were unable to produce multiple reasons for Greece being European, as compared to projecting reasons for Greece not being European, which were plentiful. The results from both groups approximated each other in terms of themes.

Domestic conflicts and divisions were identified by participants at various different registers, such as between political elites and citizens, private sector employees and public servants, among citizens in general, and between the left-wing and right-wing supporters. At the European level of conflicts, there were indications of vivid sentiments of anti-Germanism and anti-Europeanism, animated by references to WWII and stereotypes of Germans as 'Nazis'. Belligerent metaphors about European relations were made through the use of the term 'economic war' or 'threat' which showed continuation from media representations of EU affairs as 'wars'. A major contradiction appeared to be the dominant negative view of the EU, accompanied by the unwillingness to leave it. The contradiction appeared to crystallise around what was perceived as desirable, i.e. a different EU, and what was deemed implausible, i.e. leaving it. Reasons for staying appeared to relate predominantly on perceptions of dependency, insecurity and fear of the unknown.

In terms of identity devaluation on the basis of negative stereotyping, there were two main responses with the one exhibiting moderate attitudes that successfully managed the identity threat and neutralised its effects by various rationalisations, and another response that was more emotional and endorsed the effects of identity threat. Some participants could recall negative experiences with other Europeans, and a few declared that their personal relationships with other Europeans were still positive or had no experiences because they did not have contact with other Europeans. Multiple actors as creators of stereotypes were recognised, including Greek politicians. The question of responsibility appeared to be equally important for citizens as it was for ideational leaders, which contradicted the view of the latter than citizens do not engage in a process of

national self-reflection and acceptance of Greek culpability. Similar arguments were projected by citizens who thought that Greek society is not sufficiently engaging with self-examination. Although citizens engaged with all kinds of responsibility outlined by ideational leaders, i.e. collective, individual, etc., it appeared that the main axis around which questions of responsibility objectified was the relationship between politicians and citizens. Both groups were held variably accountable and qualitatively speaking the repertoire of citizens' indictments was more plentiful and diverse, while the politicians' revolved around a few basic issues, i.e. corruption, clientelism and embezzlement.

In regards to identity overvaluation, there were few overvaluing strategies that were used against stereotypes, such as defensive narcissism over work ethic and reactionary narcissism over the culture of entertainment. Contrary to what ideational leaders argued with reference to identity overvaluation based on the venerable ancient tradition, this did not appear to be used by the participants of this study for positive group distinction. Instead, participants criticised national pride on this basis, as well as conspiracy theorising. Some conspiracy theories, however, were projected by some participants, especially on the possibility of losing valuable resources to the EU. Positive stereotypes that were projected in the media were not used by the participants for the purposes of collective self-esteem. In terms of the victim stereotype, specifically, the more conventional understanding of it as devaluating was endorsed and was felt as a loss of dignity. The rebel identity was similarly rejected and pathologising representations were projected regarding the lack of resistance.

With respect to identity deficits, there were no such representations made by this study's participants, which does not deviate much from similar absences in ideational leaders' accounts. Nevertheless, an identity deficit was observable at the register of how European citizens felt, which appeared to be low in this study with most of the participants not endorsing a European identity. Results were quite varied with some feeling European strongly or weakly, and others rejecting the

European identity or opting for alternative identities, such as national, cosmopolitan and human identities. Finally, an identity deficit was argued to exist within the words that were not said, the absences of future narratives and identity trajectories for Greece.

Reaching the end of the presentation of empirical data, it can be observed that representations between ideational leaders and citizens did not deviate significantly and shared many common themes. It appears to be the case that there were more differences between these two groups' constructions and those of the international media in chapter four, while several themes of historiographical representations did not appear to be important in citizens' views. After having outlined all the empirical features of this study, the next step is to discuss the results, which shall be performed in the next chapter.

Chapter 7

Discussing collective identity crises

'...a crisis is not a natural event, but a social event, and therefore is always socially constructed and highly political'

(Gamble, 2009: 38)

'No one can make you feel inferior without your consent'

(Eleanor Roosevelt)³⁶

'I don't mind, neither Greek, nor European. What matters for me is that people feel good in themselves. When you feel good with yourself, whatever you are, you are with everybody'

(Ramfos, 2014)³⁷

Introduction

It was outlined at the beginning of this thesis that its primary problematisation was to investigate how large-scale societies and polities, such as nations, are influenced by far-reaching adverse phenomena, such as economic crises. Moreover, it was explained that this dynamic would be explored by focusing on the case study of Greece during the Greek debt/Eurozone crises within the ongoing historical context of European integration. It was hypothesised that since economic crises can have intense and long-lasting effects on individuals' personal identities (Norris, 2016), they

³⁶ A quotation attributed to Eleanor Roosevelt. Although the exact source could not be retrieved, at least three quotation websites were consulted in order to triangulate this attribution: *Quote Investigator*, *Brainy Quote*, and *Good Reads*. Last accessed 20/09/2016. Found at:
<http://quoteinvestigator.com/2011/03/30/not-inferior/>
<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/e/eleanoroo161321.html>
<http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/11035-no-one-can-make-you-feel-inferior-without-your-consent>

³⁷ Quotation from this study's interview data.

might have a similarly vivid effect on their collective identities, because of the collectively experienced character of macro-economic crises. Following a social psychological theoretical approach, it was postulated that crises and identities, as well as national and European histories, are primarily narrated by specialised professionals, what are called in this study 'ideational leaders' (Stiller, 2010), whose ideas produce public knowledge about these events and are further dispersed in the wider society to become 'common knowledge' (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014; Moscovici, 2008). In this respect, three research questions were formulated, which were the following:

- What kind of knowledge is produced about the Greek debt/Euro crisis (representations) and how is collective identity related to that knowledge?
- How do Greek citizens respond (action) to the knowledge (representation) that is produced about the Greek debt/Euro crisis and the role of Greek European identity in it?
- Does the Greek debt/Euro crisis constitute an identity crisis of Greek European identity?

The first question was methodologically addressed by looking at past Greek historiography and contemporary media and expert representations during the crisis, as well as with originally generated interview data with Greek ideational leaders, such as politicians, journalists and academics. The second question was tackled partially through these interviews with ideational leaders, but was predominantly addressed through the analysis of original interview data with Greek citizens outside the social sphere of these professions. Finally, the third question was investigated through the conceptual lenses of a newly crafted analytical framework on identity destabilisations in the form of a typology. This analytical framework was argued to be missing from the literature of collective identities or developed in incompatible ways for the study of such identities, hence its necessity. This chapter aims to provide answers to these questions, based on the analytical results presented in previous chapters.

The production of knowledge: representing Greek European identity during crisis

The first question that was posed in this research was what kind of knowledge was produced about the Greek debt/Euro crisis and how this knowledge was related to collective identity, more specifically the Greek European identity. Was this knowledge marked by representations of identity destabilisations? Was Greek European identity constructed as experiencing a collective identity crisis? Was that knowledge capable of generating destabilising experiences of identity? What kind of identity destabilisations could it prompt? Did it hold continuities to prior forms of knowledge? If so, in what ways? As shown in chapter four, public discourse about the role of Greek European identity within the economic crisis was full of multiple 'signs of crisis'. Moreover, these signs appeared to spread across the four types of identity destabilisations that were developed in our analytical framework. However, in terms of number of themes and diversity of narratives, identity conflict and devaluation appeared to be more dominant representations within the sources explored, rather than identity overvaluation and deficit.

As such, at the register of *identity conflict*, conflict was recorded at both the national and the European level, with Greece being represented as a 'divided nation' and in conflict with its European partners. A particular 'politics of blaming' appeared to be at play at both national and European levels (Ntampoudi, 2014a; Vasilopoulou *et al.*, 2013), marking the conflict through what was previously termed 'polemic representations' (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014). At the domestic level, there were multiple dynamics of polarisations between elites and citizens, among parties, among MPs, and among citizens. Polemic representations were additionally enhanced by metaphors of war and game at the European level of political affairs, which objectified European relations as belligerent, rather than peaceful and cooperative (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Kutter, 2014). Furthermore, conflictual representations appeared to crystallise between the two poles of Greece and Germany, constructing

the two nations as prototypical of the two economic regions they were made to represent, the Northern core and the Southern periphery (Ntampoudi, 2014a).

Representations of 'Greek bashing' in the German press (Bickes *et al.*, 2014b) were matched with anti-German sentiments, which were also mildly or vividly expressed by some of the ideational leaders of this study. Furthermore, the EU was represented in hostile manners in relation to Greece, enacting anti-European representations. As such, we may conclude that within the public discourse of the economic crisis, there was an extensive and glowing construction of multiple 'villains' both nationally and EU-wide, i.e. the Greeks, the Germans, the EU, the South, the North, the ND, SYRIZA, and so on, which in itself creates the representational base for multiple corresponding social divisions, hence 'breaks' of the collective identities of the nation and of Europe or the EU. As such, we can conclude that Greek European identity was represented as being in an identity conflict at both its national and European identity dimensions.

Similarly, at the register of *identity devaluation*, there were multiple 'opportunities' for identity degradations and destabilisation of collective self-esteem, since Greek European identity was objectified negatively through a variety of uncharitable metaphors, such as 'diseased', 'beggar' or 'spoiled child', among others (Bickes *et al.*, 2014a; Simonetta, 2015). Furthermore, processes of culturalisation, exceptionalisation and moralisation (Mylonas, 2012; Ntampoudi, 2014a) of the public crisis debate can be said to facilitate not only the possibility of identity devaluation in the form of an identity threat, but also in the form of stigma as a 'heavier' and more exclusionary type of identity devaluation and threat (Biernat & Dovidio, 2003). More specifically, the process of culturalisation, that is, the objectification of crisis discourses around the question of 'culture' produced several negative national stereotypes, i.e. laziness, corruption, profligacy, not only about Greece, but also about other 'programme countries'. As such, this alone creates the possibility for identity threats.

However, the exceptionalisation of Greece within the crisis invites the question of stigma, since 'international society is in part constructed through the stigmatisation of transgressive and norm-

violating states' (Adler-Nissen, 2014: 143). It could be argued that the placement of Greece and its identity in an exceptionally negative position may constitute a form of stigmatisation because of the explicit separation and exclusion this invites (Dovidio *et al.*, 2003). Moreover, suggestions voiced during the crisis by political figures, aiming at what were described as 'punishing tactics' or 'public shaming' (Petley, 2013), such as formal sanctions and disqualifications, i.e. from the Eurozone, the Schengen Zone, etc., or flags flying at half-mast 'in shame' are strategies of stigmatisation, because they aim to materialise, formalise and institutionalise what is constructed as 'unacceptable difference'.

Going back to the original historical use of stigma as a physical mark on the body of criminals, slaves or sinners (Goffman, 1963), the example of lowered flags appears as the material mark on the body of nations, materialised through its symbol, i.e. the flag. Disqualification from membership also constitutes a form of stigmatisation in the sense of exclusion. The normativity that quests for punishing and shaming entail also illustrates the intense moralisation of the crisis debate, which was articulated in the sphere of economic morality, further constructing the European prototype and as an extension its anti-prototype. Although such courses of action were not implemented during the crisis, the public discussion of them could be understood as attempts of symbolic stigmatisation, rather than outright practices of stigmatisation. Symbolic stigmatisation can lead to informal and symbolic ways of exclusion and isolation, as was seen in Southern-European member-states' tactics of symbolic distancing from the object of 'Greece'.

Production of research knowledge about Greek European identity during the economic crisis has only focused on negative representations and stereotypes (i.e. Tzogopoulos, 2013). It was attempted in this thesis to expose the complexity of stereotyping as both negative and positive and efforts were made to illustrate that Greece had not only been stereotyped negatively, but also positively. In this respect, it was demonstrated that academic, media and political discourse constructed Greece in multiple, yet interrelated, positive representations, such as those of the victim, rebel, regime

changer and the underdog. These were made possible through processes of romanticisation and universalisation of Greek identity. These representations appeared to be made by particular social groups, such as nationalist extreme-right groups (Askanius & Mylonas, 2015) or self-proclaimed leftist academics, therefore could be said to be influenced by ideology and political leanings (i.e. Mouffe *et al.*, 2012).

These representations appeared to be constructed as an opposition to the EU and inadvertently constructed its identity in negative manners, such as overtly neoliberal, capitalist, Marxist, overbearing, oppressive, and so on. In these cases, the production of knowledge about Greek European identity is situated within the production of critical knowledge about the EU, whereby the category of 'Greece' can be strategically exploited for political ends, i.e. criticising the EU, since Greece was constructed as being in conflict with it. As such, identity overvaluation opportunities were made available within the crisis discourse, albeit within particularised circles, indicating that these were not hegemonic representations, but rather emancipated ones, based on SRT's typology (Jaspal *et al.*, 2014).

Finally, identity deficits were also present within the wider discourse of the crisis, particularly objectified around the notion of national sovereignty which was presented as compromised by EU intervention (Mitsikopoulou & Lykou, 2015; Mylonas, 2015). The ideational leaders interviewed in this study were divided on this matter, with some arguing that this claim was true, and others arguing that it was not true or only partially true. The question of Grexit was presented by international commentators as a loss of Greece's European identity (Nixon, 2015), but Greek ideational leaders did not refer to or seem to share this representation. This might be attributed to attempts to minimise the insecurity caused by the question of Grexit or may indicate a refusal to equate the Euro currency with European identity. It was eventually argued that the overexpansion of Greece's identity during the crisis to account for multiple roles (Marconi, 2011) had created an effect of disappearance by allowing the category of 'Greece' to stand for everything, therefore nothing,

that is, turning it into an 'empty signifier'. As such, there were some available constructions of Greece as going through identity deficits or being in danger of undergoing them.

Conclusively, we can say that representations of multiple destabilisations of Greek European identity as being in an 'identity crisis' were found in abundance in the public discourse of the economic crisis. Still, in order to understand them better, we need to ask whether there were continuities or changes to these ideational formations. In this respect, comparing the construction of Greek European identity before and after the economic crisis we can see that there were remarkable continuations, but also possibly some changes in terms of enrichment and intensification of pre-existing patterns. As such, we can see that the dualist assumptions made by the theory of cultural dualism were revitalised within the crisis context to account for the crisis origins (Triantafyllidou *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, the ideas of support and resistance for the EU that were developed as features of the modernising and underdog culture, respectively, appeared to inform the newly intensified debate about the EU in Greece, articulated in the Memorandum versus anti-Memorandum divide and the vote for the Referendum in 2015. These new dualisms appeared to fall on top of previous well-established binaries and to create stereotypical typifications of the two camps (Xenakis, 2013).

The pre-existing conflicts between Greece and the EU during what was labelled as the 'populist decade' of Papandreou and history of public discussions regarding Greece's expulsion from the EU appeared to find continuation and intensification within the newly established Grexit debate. Furthermore, ideas of historical intervention by the West/Europe in Greek affairs are represented as historically continuous through the notion of historical 'conditional sovereignty' (Diamandouros, 1997) and 'EU conditionality' during the crisis (Rogers, 2012). The same appeared to be the case with Greece's prior status as the 'black sheep' in the EU (Economides, 2005), offering continuation to prior exclusions and sources for identity devaluation. The historical representations of Europeans being disappointed with the Greeks and Greeks being disappointed with themselves seemed to

create a distinctly unitary and dominant narrative spanning the trajectory of Greece from inception of the Greek nation-state, to EEC/EU membership, and to EMU membership and Grexit.

Positive stereotypes additionally provided similar patterns to previous historical ones, such as the Philhellenic romanticisation and universalisation of the struggles of the Greeks once upon a time against the Ottoman Empire, and now against what was constructed as an 'EU Empire' (Behr & Stivachtis, 2016). As such, while once upon a time Greek European identity was represented as an asset in creating the content of European identity as founded on the ancient Greek political tradition, in the Euro crisis context Greek European identity was represented as an asset in recreating and changing the EU's identity from what was perceived as a technocratic and apolitical formation to a more democratic and social Europe (Stavrakakis, 2014; Tekin, 2014).

As such, we could conclude that there was observable continuity from historiographical representations to academic, media and political representations of Greek European identity during the economic crisis, exhibiting highly similar narratives with continuously similar content, although enriching them with new objectifications. For instance, what used to be called 'underdogs' and 'modernisers' was objectified around the categories of 'anti-Memorandum' (αντι-μνημονιακοί) and 'Memorandum supporters' (μνημονιακοί) or 'We are all Greek' slogans resurface based on political aspirations, not cultural affinity.

This tendency towards greater continuity, rather than radical change, can be understood by Moscovici's notion of anchoring (2000), whereby new phenomena are categorised on the basis of older categories, past historical events and familiar narratives, so that cognitive certainty and ontological security can be resolved. Newly emerged research on European identities after the start of the economic crisis (Galpin, 2014) affirms that national European identities show great path dependency and reliance on pre-established understandings of national identity, national views of the EU, and perceived relations with the EU. In this sense, we can appreciate the seeming concreteness of national identity representations and their persistence, as well as the symbolic

limitations and structural constraints posed on discursive actors when they attempt to describe new phenomena, based on available discursive resources. As such, in a manner quite similar to the bricolage method of this thesis, discursive actors 'out there' make use of pre-existing discursive material to newly (re)-construct (re)-presentations and make disappeared issues (re)-appear once more. The originality of these representations rests within the authenticity of their construction, not in their *ex nihilo* conception and creativity. In other words, all knowledge is based on the (re)-appropriation of prior knowledge.

The co-construction of knowledge: experiencing Greek European identity during crisis

The second question that was posed in this thesis was how Greek citizens themselves experience the economic crisis and how they respond to the ways Greek European identity is constructed in the production of knowledge. Do Greek citizens endorse negative representations of Greek European identity and Greek society as a 'divided nation' 'in conflict' with its European identity dimension? Do they respond with overvaluing strategies to counteract possible identity threats or stigmatisations, and do they experience or perceive any absences of identity? As was shown, the production of knowledge about the economic crisis and Greek European identity within it was abundant in representations of multiple identity destabilisations at all the registers of our typology, although with particular emphasis on conflicts and devaluations. Greek citizens' representations appeared to follow a similar pattern.

Identity conflicts were present in citizens' views of both their national and European identity dimensions. Many non-expert participants projected domestic divisions between public and private sector employees, which indicated that representations of culpability of public servants were persuasive. Ideational leaders themselves spoke of personal experiences of divides between Europeanists and Eurosceptics, which attested to the polarisation of Greek society. Greek ideational

leaders also spoke of Greece's hybrid identity between East and West, anchoring the understanding of Greek identity in traditional historiographical representations and ideas of cultural dualism.

While the hegemonic representation appeared to be that of 'hybridity as a problem' and an example of self-serving Greek selectivity, some participants argued that hybridity and selectivity were desirable, because of the cosmopolitan character of the first and the capacity of the latter to combine 'the best of both worlds'. As such, those who viewed hybridity as a problem projected a representation of identity conflict, while those who viewed it as a positive feature projected a representation that resolved the identity conflict by ascribing equal value to both identities (Hirsh & Kang, 2016). However, a closer look indicated that the features chosen from the Eastern/Oriental identity were focused on solely aesthetic criteria, rather political or administrative ones which were widely identified with the Western/European identity.

As such, there might be a question of the equality of value between the respective characteristics of the two identities. Citizens appeared to make the same distinctions choosing to identify with Eastern cultural features, but not political features. In this respect, there might be issues of hierarchisation of the two identities in both supportive and critical camps of the hybridity assumption, placing a lower value on Eastern/Oriental identities compared to European ones. Hierarchisation appeared to be evident in discussions regarding Greece's possible future selves (Barone *et al.*, 1997), whereby some ideational leaders expressed the concern that Greece could have become a 'Third World' country without the assistance to the EU or may become such a country in the future, constructing 'feared possible selves' (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Optimists argued that Greece could become more European if it tried and the European prototype was often projected as a 'desired future self' (Oyserman & James, 2012). Some overvaluing tactics exhibited hierarchisation in terms of Balkan identities that were seen as less European by some elites and citizens. All these may indicate a highly hierarchical view of nations within Europe and the world on the basis of economic capacity and positive evaluation founded on economic success.

This hierarchisation and overvaluation of the European prototype may explain the next feature in the data. Several ideational leaders and citizens agreed that Greece was largely not a European country. Although this might indicate a prevailing negative attitude instilled by the economic failure and its glooming aftermath, there might be deeper dynamics at play. Looking at prior representations of Greece's trajectory within the EU, the EU is represented as a vehicle for modernisation and economic development (Esaïsson, 1999). The economic fallout appears to disrupt this profound investment in these aims, which might be a factor in influencing participants on their capacity to define Greece as European, since the European prototype seems to be interpreted as economically and politically advanced and Greece is largely viewed as falling short of these attributes. As such, we could speak of an implicit and explicit acceptance of negative stereotypes of Greece as non-European, as well as stereotypical understandings of the European prototype as Western/Northern European, rather than pluralist and diverse.

Furthermore, we may say that there is large acceptance of the moralising aspect of crisis representations, which becomes evident in the discussion of collective responsibility and national self-reflection. As put by ideational leaders, 'we need to look at ourselves' (Ramfos) and the crisis 'can, and must, help us acquire some self-knowledge' (Triantafyllou). Ideational leaders appeared to maintain certain assumptions, such as that national self-reflection was necessary and timely, missing and resisted, and should contribute to Greek society recognising its flaws and shortcomings. As such, an implicit idea that was projected may concern the need for Greek European identity to undergo the destabilisation of 'identity crisis' in the service of self-evaluation and repositioning within the new circumstances. Several citizens accepted this need for national self-reflections and self-assessment of accountability for the crisis, which contradicted the ideational leaders' view that citizens do not engage with national self-reflection or do not accept the flaws of their society.

Strategies to re-establish the wounded collective self-esteem through reevaluation or overvaluation were present in the data to a degree, but were not as prominent as devaluating and conflictual self-

understandings. For instance, several citizens rejected the idea of achieving positive self-esteem on the venerable ancient Greek tradition and very few mentioned it as the basis of European identity. Furthermore, the positive stereotypes of the crisis discourse were not endorsed. This may be explained by the wider acceptance of failure due to the economic bankruptcy and diminished collective self-esteem or it might be understood as the product of the national self-reflection that projects a critical stance towards national pride, nationalism and related types of identity overvaluation. Similarly, identity deficits were not prominent in citizens' representations. The only deficit that was observed was that of not feeling European.

These results reaffirm those of prior research conducted by Chryssochoou (2000a, 2000b) who compared Greek and French participants and showed that the respective groups defined their nations and their positions within Europe differently. Although European integration was largely justified in both cases, French citizens emphasised interdependence in the service of superordinate purposes, such as global competition and balance of power, while Greeks concentrated on dependency of Greece on the EU. As put, 'for the French, the EU is a necessity for all countries within a globalised economy, whilst for the Greeks it is a necessity for their national group's survival' (Chryssochoou, 2000b: 417). Furthermore, although the French could 'position themselves as the model' of Europeanness, Greeks appeared conscious that their country was 'economically... not up to the standards', thus 'unable... to contribute to the primary goal of the Union' (Chryssochoou, 2000b: 409-410). Furthermore, Greek participants attempted to 'justify, even to themselves, their inclusion in the EU', viewed 'themselves as inadequate and fear[ed] that others might do the same' and 'their membership might be challenged' (Chryssochoou, 2000b: 412-417). As a result, Greeks respondents largely agreed that their country would have to follow EU rules to keep up with it (Chryssochoou, 2000b). Similarly, in this study a continuity and intensification of these trends was observed with Greek citizens not recognising Greece as European, hence accepting non-prototypicality of Greek identity, and supporting EU membership on the basis of dependency.

The self-stigmatisation and self-exclusion of Greek European identity might be understood as part of a particularly persistent movement of pathologisation of hybrid identities, developing economies, and non-Western societies in Greek studies and elsewhere. As was demonstrated in prior chapters, Greek European identity was conceptualised as a 'split identity' between East and West (Lipowatz, 1994), tradition and modernisation, Europeanness and lack of it (Diamandouros, 1994; Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013). However, a closer look at the term 'split identity' reveals that it was originally used in psychopathology of personality disorders as a synonym for what is today called 'dissociative personality disorder', known in the past as 'multiple personality disorder' (Israel & Tarver, 1997). The very choice to conceptualise a national identity by 'diagnosing' a personality disorder is in itself questionable. Furthermore, the widespread use of the term along the absence of criticism is puzzling.

Although the metaphorical function of the term's usage is not in itself a problem, its uncritical usage may as well be for at least two reasons. *First*, collectivities do not have personalities, persons have person-alities. Collectivities are pluralist social formations that contain a multitude of person(alitie)s and as such, cannot have a personality disorder. This can only be possible to the degree that one postulates that nations have a concrete 'national character', a term that is long discredited (Diamandouros, 1994; Gendzel, 1997). Diamandouros himself admits to the delegitimation of the term and attempts to replace it with the term 'political culture', although this does not evade its essentialising attributes ³⁸ (Ntampoudi, 2014b). *Second*, the use of psychological disorders to speak of large-scale societies risks pathologising them and presenting them as abnormal and deviant, thus potential subjects to exclusion and discrimination.

The question of 'normalcy' further tantalises the study of Greek European identity. The body of work on Greece's Europeanisation struggles with the idea that Greece is 'not a normal country', is in need of 'normalisation' and the EU is a medium to achieve that (Economides, 2005; Magone, 2010), which

³⁸ In recent publications, Diamandouros (2013) attempts to emphasise that he is not referring to 'political culture' but instead to the 'relationship between culture and politics'. It is still maintained here that 'cultural dualism' unavoidably reproduces the image of two political cultures within a culturalist wider argument.

constitutes a set of representations that can further be understood as a pathologising function. This abnormalisation on the basis of structural inefficiencies, political culture and organisational matters, can only make sense within a teleological, developmental and evolutionary framework. These particular assumptions appear to be the central element of the culturally dualist understanding of Modern Greece and its more recent trajectory within the EU, which is largely based on modernisation theories, which have long been criticised for their assumption of progressive linearity.

For example, some project the view that the evolutionist character of modernisation theories conceals the fact that early industrialisers in Western Europe developed in conditions radically different than the ones encountered by later industrialisers, while the difficulty of overcoming a dependent and peripheral role in the global economy is often underestimated (Aldcroft, 2006; Mouzelis, 1978). Such arguments fall within wider discussions regarding 'multiple modernities', 'entangled modernities', 'varieties of modernity', and 'varieties of capitalism' (Delanty, 2013; Eisenstand, 2003; Hall & Soskice, 2001; Schmidt, 2006; Therborn, 2003). According to this stream of research, nations follow multiple routes to modernity and need not converge to a single pre-given model. Nevertheless, based on the 'divergence hypothesis' of modernisation theory those that fail to converge economically, politically and culturally are considered 'divergent' (Kalogeraki, 2009). The very language of European integration on 'convergence' (Tumpel-Gugerell & Mooslechner, 2003) necessarily constructs its antithesis: the 'divergent'.

The pathologising crisis representations of Greece as 'patient zero' posing the threat of 'contagion', a 'gangrenous limb' in need of amputation, or a 'basket case' deprived of all limbs (Zestos, 2016), provided a renewed set of metaphors, but fell upon the fertile ground of a pre-existing pathologising set of representations. Expressions such as 'pathologies' and 'normal country' were sometimes present in the expert interviews of this study, but it was more often the narrative of failed modernisation that underscored the viewpoints of participants, albeit not all participants. These pathologising metaphors, or at least the self-deprecating attitude that accompanies such metaphors,

can be said to trickle down to everyday discourse becoming common knowledge: Greek citizens in this study believed that Greece has a 'personality disorder' (Kalliopi), a 'clinical problem' (Dionysis), a 'post-traumatic stress disorder' (Eleftheria) and was in need to be examined by a psychologist (Nestoras). This profound dissolution with the national self, appears to be continuous throughout Greek historiography, as well as in representations after the beginning of the economic crisis.

However, it is questionable whether believing in 'Greek pathology' can assist society to move forward, since positive collective self-esteem could foster collective sense of political efficacy that could assist a society to organise itself around collective goals and action, aimed at overcoming economic and social adversities. This is a robust reason to argue in favour of a new narrative for Greece. There were few occurrences within the data when it was implied that a new narrative was needed about Greece and its national European identity. As was put by Panousis, 'the Greek needs to find a new identity' because as was explained by Papakonstantinou, paraphrasing Gramsci, 'our old self is dying, the new one has not been born yet'. Similarly, one citizen participant in this study commented that we become weary of hearing about the same divisions of East and West, North and South. This argument in favour of a new narrative appears to have preoccupied Greek intellectuals for a while. For instance, it was argued in the past that the academic community has failed to create a new narrative and understanding of Greek identity by reproducing the same conceptual categories, relations, and argumentations (Tsoukalas, 1999; Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013).

Under this light, the failure of Greek ideational leaders has been said to 'reside[s] in the continuing incapacity of Greek intellectuals to construct a new and internally coherent stereotype' (Tsoukalas, 1999: 13). Somehow within this polemic rests the idea that if only a reinvented Greece could be imagined by its thinkers, the ideational leaders, then the self-understanding of the country could alter and lead to renewed social attitudes and practices. Particularly after the beginning of the economic crisis, it has been voiced that there is a need of a new narrative about Greece that has not been offered yet, which is why binary oppositions, such as cultural dualisms, re-emerge persistently

(Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2013). Although this quest for a new narrative was not a dominant representation within this study's datasets, there were few allusions to it, which are considered noteworthy not only for the purposes of rebranding the negative international identity of Greece after the crisis, but also for providing a new stratagem for the country's future policy and collective action.

Conclusion: do economic crises constitute collective identity crises?

It was explained in the introduction that the central problematisation of this thesis was to understand whether economic crises may constitute crises of the collective identities of the societies they inflict. After this exploration of the case of Greece, which was facilitated by a typology of different types of identity destabilisations, in order to understand more deeply the workings of identity phenomena, we could infer some suggestions for answering this question.

Economic crises and bankruptcies are conditions of failure (Featherstone, 2011; Hindmoor & McConnell, 2015), and as such, entail a 'politics of blaming' not only because the void of leadership and governance they may provoke (Hill & Chu, 2001) allows opportunities for power competition, but also because the intensity of the experience emotionally and psychologically provokes people to ask for accountability, even call for punishment. Within such a context narratives, arguments and indictments proliferate (Armony & Armony, 2005). This surplus of ideas and polemics may lower the possibility for representations of identity deficits in people's perceptions, which may explain the prevalence of identity conflicts and other destabilisations.

As conditions of failure, economic crises and bankruptcies entail having to admit defeat, powerlessness and inability, which can lead to diminished self-esteem and an identity threat (Smith, 2014). Furthermore, failure more widely disrupts the construction of desired future selves that both individuals and societies hold for themselves. According to this self-schema, a future identity is imagined and revered, hoped for and anticipated (Oyserman & James, 2012). In the case of

developing economies, societies may become invested in a future national identity that can acquire collective self-esteem from its economic success, autonomy and self-sufficiency. It may be often be the case that such future national identities are built on the projection of a prototype. In the case of Greece, this prototype has been the Western/Northern European advanced and industrialised economy. In Argentina's case, for instance, this prototype was built on North-America's economic success (Armony & Armony, 2005). This may indicate that nations built their desired and anticipated identities on the examples offered by powerful neighbours.

Economic bankruptcy, and the destitution and dependency that follows it, at both state and grassroots level, is tantamount to the failure of economic development and lack of self-sufficiency and autonomy, especially within the context of a competitive global financial system (Antoniades, 2013; Narotzky, 2016). Furthermore, the inability to achieve these tasks relates to the failure to successfully and fruitfully mobilise internal and external resources, whether natural and material or ideational and relational, for the achievement of positive 'national reputation' which is directly linked to a country's external image, hence identity (Bond *et al.*, 2003: 375). As Landes (2003: 357-358), in his seminal book on industrial development in Europe, *Unbound Prometheus*, has argued:

'...economic development is a great drama. It is the puberty of nations, the passage that separates the men from the boys. It therefore carries with it, in a world that admires power and covets material prosperity, connotations of success and virility... Because of the profound implications of this drama for the status of the participants, the explanations offered for success or failure are themselves crucial to the self-esteem of these societies and their members.'

Consequently, we can appreciate that economic failure is reasonably related to a devalued collective self-esteem. Furthermore, the very language of finance can be said to be carrying a symbolically detrimental lexicon. For example, countries that face economic problems have to follow currency or internal *devaluation*, that is, lower their value (Tsoukala, 2013). Some openly refer to the experience of such devaluations as 'nationally humiliating' (Kondeas, 2011: 125). Another example concerns the role of rating agencies that evaluate national economies placing them in a hierarchy of financial

worthiness, credibility and desirability and use negative terms such as 'downgrading' and 'junk status' (Featherstone, 2011: 194). Within the web of cognitive and discursive associations it is not only national bonds that are rated, but nations themselves, while in a competitive global economy that is unavoidably hierarchical, it is easy to forget that if someone is the first, someone has to be the last. As such, we can appreciate that the often overlooked economic dimension of national identity, compared to their civic and cultural ones, is especially important (Bond *et al.*, 2003). As an extension, the surplus of identity devaluation that economic crises can impose may explain the obliteration of identity overvaluations strategies.

Conclusions

The present thesis was a socio-psychological study of national European identities in Greece. Its principal aim was to investigate whether Greece's economic crisis, as this was experienced within the context of European integration, constituted an identity crisis of Greek European identity. This aim was motivated by the wider problematisation regarding to what degree and in what ways economic crises may constitute collective identity crises. It was initially argued that phenomena such as economic crises are rarely looked at through an identity prism and that existing theories of 'identity crisis' are not adequately or fittingly developed to account for collective identity phenomena under crisis conditions. As such, this thesis's aim was to contribute to the development of an analytical framework of identity destabilisations that could trigger identity crises. For this purpose a typology of varied identity destabilisations was analytically developed and operationalised for the examination of Greek European identity during the Greek debt/Euro crisis. The typology included destabilisations on the basis of identity conflict, identity devaluation, identity overvaluation and identity deficit.

Four main domains were explored in order to understand the phenomenon at hand. At first, historiographical representations of Greek European identity were looked at. The division between East and West and the perception of hybridity as a 'problem' appeared to be dominant schemas. Binary oppositions in the form of cultural dualism, as well as trends of vacillations between identities devaluations and overvaluations at the internal (i.e. Hellenism) and external (Philhellenism) registers of national identities were recognised. Deficits of identity were identified in the idea of Greece a Western product and in Greece's possible expulsion from the EU.

Academic, media and political representations were looked at next to decipher contemporary narratives on Greek European identity and the economic crisis. Revivals of dualisms and

polarisations were identified and representations of domestic and European conflicts were found in abundance. Negative stereotypes operated at the levels of objectifications through metaphors and processes of culturalisation, exceptionalisation and moralisation. Positive stereotypes of Greek European identity were also recorded through processes of romanticisation and universalisation, while identity deficits were objectified around the questions of sovereignty and Grexit.

Interviews with Greek ideational leaders reaffirmed the historical understanding of divide between East and West and the 'problem' of hybridity and the existence of domestic and European conflicts. Negative stereotypes were received with quests for national self-reflection, acceptance of Greek culpability in the formation of the crisis, and abandonment of overvaluation of identity and conspiracy theories. Alternatively, negative stereotypes were received with projections of arguments about the strategic framing of Greece for political purposes and criticisms against the EU. The question of exceptionalism was variably negotiated, but widely not accepted. Few overvaluing strategies were recorded, but were ultimately marginal in this study. Positive stereotypes of Greek European identity during the crisis seemed to be present in this study's ideational leaders, but were not widely endorsed. EU membership, and as a consequence, European identity, was largely represented as the only option for Greece, which was examined as an identity deficit due to the absence of options it entails, while Europe's identity loss was also discussed.

Interviews with Greek citizens indicated that their representations did not deviate significantly from those of ideational leaders. The divide between East and West and the 'problem' of hybridity made their appearance, while domestic and European conflicts were presented at various levels. An important contradiction in citizens' opinions was the increased negative perception of the EU combined with unwillingness to leave it, which was perceived as an issue of dependency, powerlessness and fear of the unknown. Negative stereotypes were received either with rationalising and neutralising attitudes that resolved identity threats or with more emotional responses that did not challenge the existence of identity threat. Citizens, similarly to ideational

leaders, spoke of the need of Greek society to engage in self-reflection and accept Greek responsibility, although the divide between citizens and elites rendered the latter more accountable. The question of exceptionalism was perplexing for citizens and was not endorsed. Overvaluing strategies were not widespread in this study's participants, although some mild revaluating tactics and some conspiracy theories were projected. Positive stereotypes produced during the crisis were not known, neither accepted as valid possibilities. The only vivid identity deficit that was recorded in the citizens' interviews was that most of them did not feel European.

Overall, there appeared to be observable continuities between past and present representations of Greek European identity and expert and non-expert knowledge did not seem to deviate greatly. While the first may be attributed to the discursive constraints posed by previous representations that are reproduced in a path dependency manner, the latter may indicate the influence of expert representations and their successful diffusion in the wider society, albeit with minor differences. Comparing between the different types of identity destabilisations, across the data from the four different sources of empirical data, identity conflict and devaluation appeared to be more prominent than identity overvaluation and deficits. It was speculated that this may be attributed to the greater sense of failure, disempowerment and dissolution that economic crises can inflict.

Evaluation of theoretical and empirical contribution

This thesis attempted to contribute to emerging knowledge in both theoretical and empirical ways. The theoretical contribution comprised of the formation of a typology of identity destabilisations, which was used to explore the Greek case's potential identity crisis. It is evaluated that this model served the endeavour adequately for a variety of reasons. *First*, by acknowledging the multidimensionality of crisis phenomena, it was able to illustrate the complexity of identity destabilisations that could act as crisis triggers. *Second*, by doing so, it enriched our understanding of identity destabilisation and 'identity crisis', a term that is often used in prior literature without

theoretical foundation or developed inadequately. *Third*, following a bricolage approach, the model was able to capitalise on the strengths and insights emanating from multiple sources. As a result of all of the above, it is argued in this thesis that the typology and the conceptualisation of the respective destabilisations contribute to a clearer development of an analytical framework of potential triggers of identity crisis.

In terms of the empirical contribution of this study, as was previously explained, empirical data with Greek ideational leaders have been rather scarce in the past and a bibliographical review only reveals a handful of studies, while the existing ones focus on proxy sources such as the media or foreign policy analysis. This study contributed with original interview data with Greek politicians, journalists and academics, adding to the limited stock of qualitative and participatory studies. It was further explained that prior studies of citizens' attitudes towards European integration and European identities had focused on survey data from the Eurobarometers, rather than alternative qualitative methods. The interviews conducted with citizens in this study contribute a wealth of qualitative data, which seemed to be missing from the literature on European identities in Greece after the start of the economic crisis.

Elaborating on the theoretical contribution, as expected, the academic literature is full of terminological debates and disagreements over the correct use of words, terms, concepts and analytical categories or operationalisation of variables (Downs & Mohr, 1976; Gallie, 1956). In a similar fashion, 'social identity theory' is sometimes referred to as 'social identity *approach*' that incorporates the original social identity theory advanced by Henri Tajfel, as well as the 'self-categorisation theory', developed by Tajfel's colleague, John C. Turner (Turner *et al.*, 1987). This theoretical branch of the social identity approach builds on the cognitivist elements of the approach, exploring how people categorise themselves and others. Another example of a sub-theory under the social identity approach is 'identity process theory' as developed by Glynis M. Breakwell (1986), as both Turner and Breakwell were students of Tajfel (Deaux, 2014) and SIT was their starting point of

theorisation. With reference to the future development of the present analytical framework of identity destabilisations, it is speculated that in a parallel fashion it could potentially be accommodated as a sub-theory under the wider umbrella of the 'social identity approach' with a particular focus on the complex diversity and dynamic multiplicity of identity destabilisations and their relation to possible identity crises.

However, before it can claim to constitute a 'theory' as such, there are several facets that would need to be further developed and clarified. At its current state, the framework is an analytic one, being constituted by a set of *analytical categories*, proposed for the study of the phenomenon of identity destabilisation/crisis. The different categories appear to be useful in disentangling and descriptively clarifying the diverse dynamics of identity destabilisation and routes to possible identity crises. As such, the framework has a degree of analytical and descriptive value. However, in order for it to step closer into the area of theorisation, it would need to be transformed into a fuller *conceptual framework*, defined as 'a network... of interlinked concepts that together provide a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon or phenomena' (Jabareen, 2009: 51). In this sense, each analytical category of identity destabilisation (conflict, devaluation, overvaluation, and deficit) would need to be more comprehensively conceptualised by a set of concepts that correspond to factors that characterise the respective types of identity destabilisation. These more elaborate conceptual frameworks can then be used as the building blocks for a more generalised theory of identity destabilisation/crisis. As explained (List & Valentini, 2016: 531), 'we use concepts to categorise or classify objects and[...] they serve as ingredients in the activity of... theorizing'.

The difference between analytical and conceptual frameworks and a *theory* is to be found in the latter's capacity to make statements and propositions about the state of social reality (List & Valentini, 2016). Analytical categories and concepts themselves cannot make theoretical claims or have propositional content about reality, as theories are meant to do, but they can be useful in synthesising theoretical statements (List & Valentini, 2016; Stanley, 2012). As explained (List &

Valentini, 2016: 535), 'only statements in which [concepts] occur can have truth-values', thus claim theoretical validity. That having been said, every theory is a partially true story, since no theory can explain the totality of the world. At best, they can illuminate in an adequate, satisfying and convincing manner *an aspect* of the world, which is another way of saying that every explanation derived from a theory is necessarily reductionist (Dowding in Stanley, 2012). This is an important point to make, because there appears to be a misunderstanding in the literature that theories explain *the world* (Stanley, 2012), when it is more accurately to say that theories try to explain a fragment of the world. Instead, it is *ideologies* that pretend to explain the totality of the world (Arendt, 2005), not theories, hence the pitfall is situated in treating our theories in an ideological manner.

Returning to the analytical framework's potential for theoretical development, expanding and specifying its analysis conceptually, would additionally need to connect the dots between different analytical categories and concepts within these categories. For example, there would need to be further clarity on how different factors, conceptualised as objects of analysis, interact with identity destabilisations to either escalate destabilisations into crises or protect social entities from crisis by resolving imbalances. This would be necessary for the framework's transformation into a theory since as argued (Dowding in Stanley, 2012), theories should be able to comment on both differences and similarities in the objects to which they are supposed to be applicable. We may assume that such inquiries could also transform existing research questions by refocusing the focus on dynamics of resistance to identity crisis and rebalancing acts.

This could result in reframing research agendas and posing new questions, such as what makes societies resilient to collective identity crises during 'hard times' (i.e. economic crises)? Furthermore, such questionings could lead to introducing new analytical categories, such as the ones of 'social identity resilience' or 'balancing capacity', and so on (see also: Keck & Sakdapolrak's 'social resilience' concept and analytical framework of 'coping, adaptive and transformative capacities',

2013; or Block's 'ego-resiliency' in Marcia, 2009). To be sure, these problematisations would also need to be situated in correspondence with the 'mother' approach's SIT theorisations of identity threat management strategies in order to be informed by these, but also to inform them back with any possible new insights springing from empirical research, or even cross-fertilise them with other approaches.

Furthermore, greater clarity would be necessitated on the relationships between the different destabilisations, since questions still remain. For example, under what circumstances do these identity destabilisations co-exist and do they have an accumulative effect on identity and its potential crisis? In addition, are these four types of identity destabilisations better understood as parts of two continuums based on SIT's two fundamental assumptions of the human psychological need for certainty and self-esteem (Hymans, 2002)? To the degree that this could be the case (see 'continuum debate' regarding Marcia's 'identity statuses theory' in Waterman, 1988; also Marcia, 2009), identity conflict and identity deficit could be understood as two extreme circumstances of identity uncertainty triggered by multiple clashing commitments, values or goals in the case of the first, and absence of them in the case of the latter. In this respect, it could be hypothesised that too many or too little commitments destabilise the sense of identity, while the existence of a minimum set of clear enough commitments facilitates the perception of identity balance. The further away the perceived distance is situated from this standard, the greater the sense of instability, hence the identity destabilisation and potential crisis.

Similarly, identity devaluations and overvaluation could perhaps be better situated upon a continuum of need for 'self-esteem' (one's own self-schema as represented by the individual or the group itself) or simply social 'esteem' (one's identity schema in society, as represented by others), corresponding to perceived allocations. As prescribed by the analytical framework, on the one end of the spectrum there would be 'low self-esteem/social esteem' as opposed to the other end's 'high self-esteem/ social esteem'. Correspondingly, the category/concept of 'stigma' would be situated

further away from the balanced centre compared to the category/concept of the 'stereotype', as postulated by the differentiation made in the analytical framework (Biernat & Dovidio, 2003). Moreover, the additional clarifications between 'esteem' and 'self-esteem', 'stereotype' and 'self-stereotype', 'stigma' and 'self-stigma' would better refine the difference between self-generated representations and representations made by other social actors, which would facilitate to further elucidate the relationship between the individual and society. The question on this relationship would then relate back to fundamental social sciences' questions such as the ones on the relationship between agency and structure. Table I and II schematically illustrates the two continua on certainty and (self)-esteem.

Two foundational SIT identity assumptions: need for certainty and self-esteem

Table I: Continuum on need for certainty

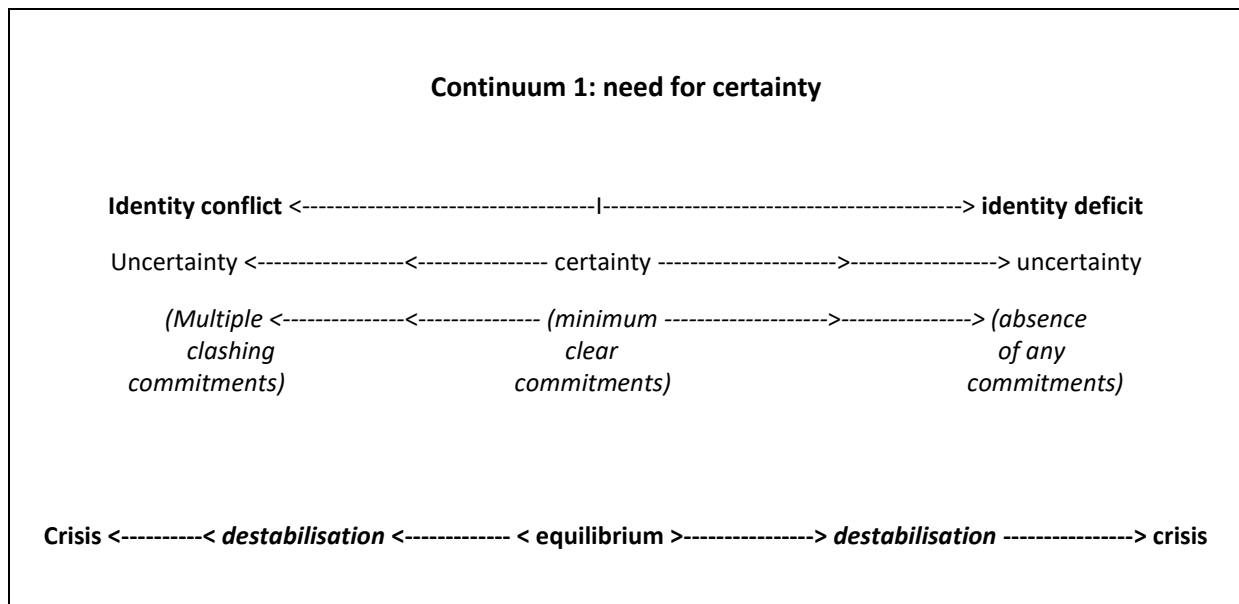
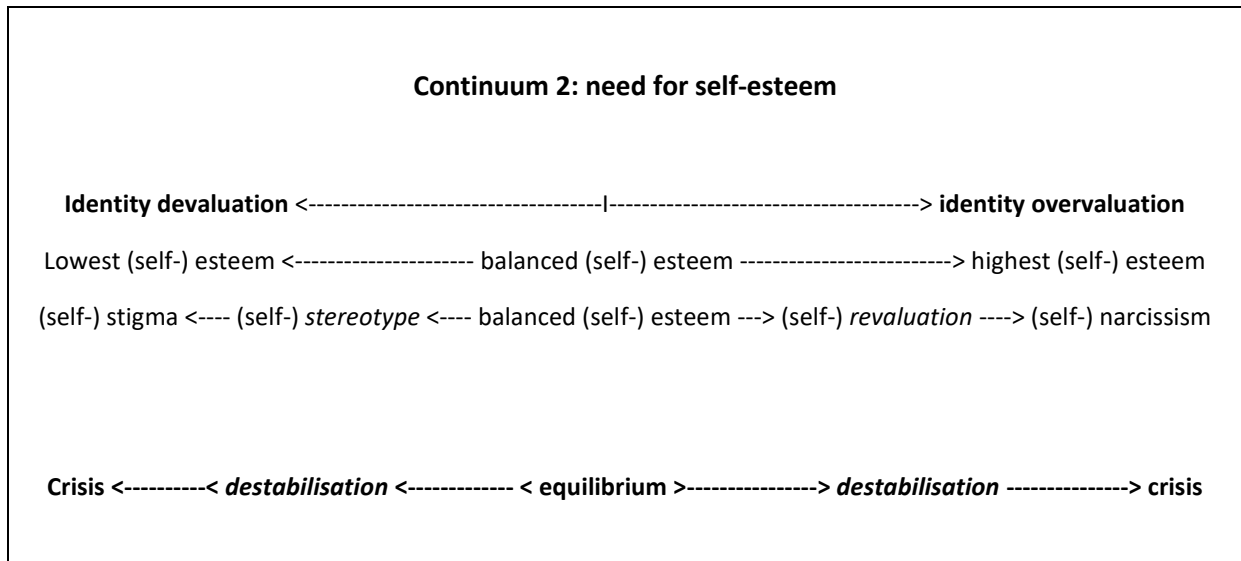


Table II: Continuum on need for self-esteem



As with any schematisation of analytical categories/concepts, meant to speak of social phenomena, which necessarily operates at some level of abstraction (Mayntz, 2004; Oehrtman on Piaget, 2008), there might be both strengths and weaknesses in their operationalisation in research, or otherwise put, their ‘scope of applicability’ (Mayntz, 2004: 246). Although the two analytical continua appear to be making a useful step towards understanding the connections between the respective identity destabilisations/potential crises, there are some pitfalls that could easily be foreseen and acknowledged. For instance, one of the major challenges that is bound to arise whenever there is talk of ‘balances’ is what could be called the ‘problem of proportionality’. How much stereotyping constitutes stigma? How many commitments is too many commitments? How much identity revaluation ends up being narcissistic, instead of beneficial for esteem recovery? How much uncertainty is too much uncertainty? And ultimately, how much destabilisation would be necessitated to legitimately talk of a ‘crisis’? By which standards and criteria could we assess these different states? In addition, from a theorising point of view, one could also wonder, how much level

of abstraction would be necessitated for a framework to claim theoretical status that might warrant any degree of generalisation or transferability among cases? (Wiley, 1988; see also Boudon on 'ranges of theories', 1991).

Returning to the substantive issues of identity destabilisations themselves, research participants themselves could evaluate their own experiences and understandings of the associated phenomena, in which case people's perceptions could provide the required answers. Alternatively, in the absence of participants' input, researchers would need to arbitrarily or normatively make distinctions between the different conditions. This last mention of normativity, additionally brings to the fore, the question of what kind of theory this potentially developed framework, would aim to be. As explained, there are two main areas of theorising, positive and normative theories (List & Valentini, 2008). In the first case, theories play 'descriptive, explanatory and predictive' roles, while in the second case, theories play 'evaluative, prescriptive and normative roles' (List & Valentini, 2008: 10-11). An initial assessment would be that a possible theoretical development of the present framework should be within the area of the first kind of theories and attempts should be made on building the framework's explanatory potential. In this respect, substantial steps should be made towards the aforementioned clarifications, since as argued, an 'exegetical approach... emphasizes logical rigour, terminological precision, and clear exposition' (List & Valentini, 2016: 525).

It could be argued that normativity should have a secondary role within this endeavour, if only for allowing a more complexified and openly interpreted notion of 'destabilisation'. For instance, the either implicit or explicit normative assumptions made by Eriksonian developmental theory of identity crisis that individuals *must* achieve identity coherence *and* overcome crises prescribes an all too linear, evolutionist progression towards the end goal of 'identity', as well as the desirability of identity stability. However, instead, people may understand or experience their identity destabilisations positively, at least to some degree. For example, as proposed by one of the research participants, identity devaluation could be liberating from the demands of achievement (p. 217;

present thesis). Moreover, destabilisations of previously stabilised collective identities may be understood as highly desirable if they lead to positively perceived social change, as was the case with demands made by participants for national self-reflection and self-inflicted critical devaluation (chaps 5 and 6; present thesis).

In this respect, a lesser normative intentionality on behalf of the theoretical endeavour could safeguard it from representing 'identity balance' as the golden standard of all identity endeavours or representing individuals or groups as 'maladjusted' (Marcia, 2009: 353). That having been said, this 'shying away' from overt normativity is not to be misunderstood as a claim that social researchers should be 'cool scientists' (Boulding, 1977: 78) in front of politically loaded social issues such as exclusion, stereotyping and stigmatisation. There is most definitely a place for social advocacy within social sciences (Becker, 1967; Laue, 1989), provided that cases are well-argued and well-evidenced, which primarily necessitates the achievement of analytical, conceptual, and theoretical rigour, as well as empirical, participatory research (see also, debate on the sociology of the 'underdog' in Becker, 1967 and Gouldner, 1968).

Conclusively, there remains expansive theoretical research, reflection and empirical exploration to be made in order to assess whether the analytical framework can fruitfully illuminate identity phenomena and complement the existing SIT approach. Nevertheless, its current descriptive and analytical value provides some optimism for future explanatory development. Alternatively, it can remain an analytical framework and serve analytical purposes.

Limitations and recommendations for future research

This study's recommendations for future research largely spring from its limitations. The focus of the present study was largely analytical, aiming to develop the understanding of 'identity crisis', as well as predominantly qualitative, aiming to elucidate the diversity of discourses and representations of Greek European identity within the economic crisis. Consequently, the results of this study should

not be generalised to the Greek population, but instead should be treated as indications of the multiplicity of ideas and experiences that circulate within Greek society. As such, in order to understand the aggregate aspect of the same phenomena, quantitative studies should be conducted.

Furthermore, this study implemented a single case study research design, which was able to allow for detailed analysis of the case of Greece and a more holistic and triangulated approach that incorporated a multiplicity of data sources. However, being a single case study design, this research could not benefit from the merits of comparing the Greek case with other cases. As such, it is proposed that future research could explore national European identities during the Euro crisis through comparative research designs that can allow for a greater understanding of similarities and differences between cases, as well as specifications regarding factors that facilitate or hinder certain outcomes.

Finally, we may observe that research conducted in a contemporaneous manner is like trying to hit a moving target. This thesis attempted to research national and European identities for a single case during a particular historical moment, which was defined by temporal conditions, and with reference to the event and process of the economic crisis. However, since the beginning of this research, there have been several important new political developments and emerging dynamics that may influence the state of national and European identities, both in Greece and in Europe.

In Greece alone, the victory of SYRIZA can be argued to constitute a turning point and new research may benefit from examining identities before and after SYRIZA's rise to power. Some examples with EU-wide repercussions include Brexit, terrorist attacks and the ongoing refugee crisis. As such, national European identities should be examined in light of these new burning issues.

Policy Implications and suggestions for future practice

Given that identity conflict and identity devaluation appeared to be more prominent destabilising features of identity both in the internal and the external dimension of the Greek European identity, that is, both in the ways Greek citizens understand themselves and construct collective self-stereotypes and in the ways Greek European identity has been represented outside Greece, we may argue that future political initiatives and policies should concentrate on reconstructing Greek identity both domestically and internationally.

Domestically efforts should be made to enhance social cohesion, collective action, and social capital. These social assets could prove valuable in rebuilding the shattered economy by encouraging collaboration and solidarity among citizens. Most importantly, efforts should be directed by the political leadership to rebuild the destroyed relationship between citizens and political elites and resituate it on a new direction.

Internationally, political leadership should concentrate on altering the negative image that was created about Greece during the last years. New narratives of Greek identity need to be encouraged, accompanied by positive representations of economic recovery. At the European level, diplomacy should endeavour to restore broken relationships and redirect Greece's EU relations to more peaceful and fruitful pathways, especially in light of arising and ongoing common European problems, such as terrorism and refugee crises. Such large-scale security problems necessitate functional and beneficial international relations that foster cooperation and responsibility sharing.

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APPENDICES

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Appendix 2: Demographic, cosmopolitan and political characteristics of the sample

The citizens' interviews included a total of 34 participants, one third female (11) and two thirds male (23). The youngest participant was 20 years old and the oldest 70 years old. In terms of occupation, there were 6 public sector employees, 6 private sector employees, 6 self-employed, 6 unemployed, 6 students, and 4 pensioners. With reference to education, 10 participants had been to a vocational/technical school, 13 had studied or were currently studying in Higher Education (AEI, TEI), and 9 held a MA degree. In terms of disability, 2 participants declared a disability. Both belonged to the unemployed group.

In terms of cosmopolitan characteristics, 12 participants spoke one foreign language (English), 13 spoke two foreign languages, 3 spoke three foreign languages, 2 spoke four foreign languages, and 3 spoke none. These last three belonged to the pensioners' group. In terms of living abroad, a majority of 23 participants had previously lived in Greece only, 8 individuals had lived in one other European country, and 2 had lived in more than two foreign countries. In terms of travelling experience, most participants had travelled in Europe (30), 14 extensively (more than 5 countries), and 3 had never travelled before. About half of the participants had travelled outside Europe (17). Most participants had at least a few friends who were not Greek (23), while the rest (10) had none.

Regarding political characteristics, 14 participants identified with the left side of the political spectrum (6 centre-left, 4 left, 4 extreme left), while only 5 participants identified with the right-wing spectrum (4 centre-right, 1 extreme right). One participant chose the centre, while 13 participants declared that they would not position themselves in such a spectrum. Table 1 summarises electoral choices during the national elections of May/June 2012 and intention to vote in the European Parliament elections of May 2014.

The participants were asked what they voted for in the May/June 2012 elections, as well as what they intended to vote for in the European elections of May 2014. The data on Table III table were derived from 33 completed questionnaires by 33 out of 34 research participants. Since there were 3 electoral episodes between the start of the crisis in late 2009 and the time of the fieldwork in 2014, this dataset amounts to a total number of 99 ballots that would normally be cast by these 33 participants. Table III illustrates the distribution of votes across political parties and further includes information on invalid votes, abstention, indecision, and 'none' answers. The final column at the right end summarises the total number of ballots for each electoral choice across these three electoral episodes. As can be seen, not one PASOK supporter was encountered within this group of participants, reaffirming the electoral downfall of the once dominant party. SYRIZA, DIMAR, ANEL and ANTARSYA, as well as other smaller political parties, appeared to be the most represented choices within the citizens' sample. With ANEL being the only right-wing of the four, it appears that left-wing parties were more overwhelmingly represented within this group of participants, compared to right-wing ones, as is also reaffirmed by the way participants assigned themselves on the political spectrum. Beyond party choices, abstention was by far the most distinct feature of the data in all three episodes, and a total of 26 ballots was not cast or intended to be cast. Finally, indecision regarding the European elections was quite prevalent among respondents, with almost one third not knowing what to vote for.

Table III: Electoral choices for May/June 2012 and intention to vote for EU elections May 2014

	Greek elections May 2012	Greek elections June 2012	European elections May 2014	SUM of ballots
PASOK	0	0	0	0
ND	2	1	-	3
SYRIZA	2	4	4	10
ANEL	4	2	1	7
DIMAR	4	4	-	8
Potami	-	-	1	1
ELIA	-	-	2	2
LAOS	1	1	-	2
KKE	2	1	1	4
Golden Dawn	1	-	2	3
ANTARSYA	2	2	3	7
Various small parties	5	3	-	8
Invalid/void	-	1	1	2
Abstention	7	12	7	26
Undecided	-	-	10	10
Don't know/ don't answer	3	2	1	6
SUM of total ballots	33	33	33	99

Appendix 3: Detailed interview guide

Section 1: introductory questions about the crisis

In the introductory part of the interview, the participants were asked how the crisis had influenced them and they were encouraged to think holistically about the issue by adding the suggestion 'whether economically, politically, socially or psychologically'. This question was used as an opening of the interview because the researcher wanted to discover whether participants would speak of an identity threat posed by the crisis on their own initiative, that is, whether they would frame the crisis as an identity issue. Furthermore, this question was posed because it was necessary to establish from the start how the individual was situated towards the crisis. The participants were then asked about their opinion regarding the origins of the crisis in Greece in order to illuminate whether they were placing blame on Greece predominantly or whether they blamed other political actors mostly or distributed responsibility in mixed ways. This section also wanted to see if Greek citizens widely accepted the culturalist interpretation of the economic crisis as springing from the 'nature' of the Greek national identity, before explicit questions of national identity were posed. The participants were also asked what would need to change based on their diagnosis of the crisis causes in order to clarify even more their views on the matter.

Section 2: the Greek national identity within the crisis

In the second section participants were asked about how the Greek national identity was affected during the economic crisis and they were asked to comment on that in two ways: how Greeks view themselves and how others view them. This was an introductory question on Greek national identity within the crisis before moving on to the more specified questions about the negative stereotypes of laziness, profligacy and corruption or the ways that Greece may have been represented as a 'special case'. The participants were asked to talk about these phenomena and share their thoughts and feelings about them. At the end of this section participants were asked to talk about what they thought was positive about the Greek nation, so that the section could end in a more positive tone, but also to address the other side of the phenomenon of national identity. This question was also useful to see if participants engaged in strategies of collective self-esteem enhancement as proclaimed by the social identity approach.

Section 3: European integration and the European Union

In the third section of the interview, the respondents were asked to share their opinion on the theme of European integration and whether they thought it was a good idea. This question aimed to understand the general attitude of the participants towards the European project as developed by the European Union. Subsequently, participants were asked to discuss more specifically the role of Greece within the EU and to reflect back to the previous decades of EU membership and state whether it has been beneficial for Greece. The same was asked regarding Eurozone membership and the issue of Grexit was additionally addressed asking participants if they supported a monetary exit or even an exit from the EU. The third section widely aimed at addressing the question of EU identity, rather than European identity as these have been defined previously in the theoretical chapter and comprehend how much and under what terms Greek citizens would like to be, or not thereof, part of European integration.

Section 4: the European Union as the Troika and the crisis management

In the fourth part of the interview, the discussion continued around issues of the European Union but now themes focused mostly on the management of the crisis. Respondents were asked to talk about the Troika and whether this experience had compromised their support for the EU or had changed their feelings towards European integration. The participants were also asked about the reforms, the austerity measures and the memoranda and whether these were justifiable or unfair.

Section 5: the European identity

In the final major part of the interview, the concept of 'European identity' was tackled with the participants who were asked what it was that makes a country European and whether Greece was a European country. The respondents were also asked if they themselves felt European and whether people could have both identities harmonically or if the two would necessarily have to be in conflict. In addition, participants were asked if there is anything that makes Europe unique compared to other regions of the world in order to understand their view of the idea of 'Europe'. Finally, participants were asked to construct their own interpretation of the term 'European identity'. In general, this last section attempted to address different dimensions of European identities and understand participants' sense of belonging to Europe, personally and collectively as Greeks.

Section 6: closing questions

At the end of the interview, the participants were always asked three questions. First, they were asked to choose the most important issue that we had talked about during the interview. Second, they were asked if they could send messages to other Greek citizens, the Greeks of the diaspora and non-Greeks, i.e. other Europeans, what these messages would be. Finally, the participants were asked whether there was an issue that was not discussed during the interview which they felt was important and should be mentioned.

Appendix 4: Research participant information pack

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Research Participant Consent Form - Elite

For the doctoral research project called:

National and European Identities during the Eurozone Crisis: The Case of Greece

- I agree to be interviewed for the purposes of the research project named above.
- The purpose and nature of the research has been explained to me, and I have read the information sheets provided by the researcher.
- I was given the opportunity to ask questions about the research project and they have been answered by the researcher to my satisfaction.
- The process of the interviewing session has been explained to me fully in advance by the researcher, and I understand what to expect.
- I agree that the interviewing session will be electronically recorded for future analysis.
- I understand that the researcher may choose to pursue academic publications based on this research project and the data that come out of the interview, which can be available to me upon request.
- I have been informed by the researcher that I maintain the right to withdraw from this research project at any time, with no further consequences.
- I choose to... (please, circle either a) or b):
 - a) Allow the researcher to use or cite my name for the purposes of this research.
 - b) Not allow the researcher to use or cite my name for the purposes of this research.

Name of participant: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

The researcher:

- I have explained the nature of the research project to the participant and the implications of his or her involvement in this project.
- I have made every necessary effort to answer the questions that the participant addressed to me.
- I believe that the participant is fully informed and has sufficiently understood the nature of the research project and the implications of his or her involvement.
- I commit to make every effort to protect the anonymity of the research participant, if he or she so desires.

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Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

If volunteers have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, they should contact the Secretary of the University Ethics Committee that initially approved this research, on [REDACTED] or telephone [REDACTED]

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Research Participant Consent Form - Citizen

For the doctoral research project called:

National and European Identities during the Eurozone Crisis: The Case of Greece

- I agree to be interviewed individually or as part of a team for the purposes of the research project named above.
- The purpose and nature of the research has been explained to me, and I have read the information sheets provided by the researcher.
- I was given the opportunity to ask questions about the research project and they have been answered by the researcher to my satisfaction.
- The process of the interviewing session has been explained to me fully by the researcher, and I understand what to expect.
- I agree that the interviewing session will be electronically recorded for future analysis.
- All personal information provided by myself will remain confidential and no data that identify me will be made publicly available.
- I have been informed by the researcher that I maintain the right to withdraw from this research project at any time, with no further consequences.
- I understand that the researcher may choose to pursue academic publications based on this research project and the data that come out of the interview, which can be available to me upon request.

Name of participant: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

The researcher:

- I have explained the nature of the research project to the participant and the implications of his or her involvement in this project.
- I have made every necessary effort to answer the questions that the participant addressed to me.
- I believe that the participant is fully informed and has sufficiently understood the nature of the research project and the implications of his or her involvement.
- I commit to make every effort to protect the anonymity of the research participant.

Ioanna Ntampoudi

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UACES Scholar 2014
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Aston Triangle
Birmingham B4 7ET
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Tel. (UK): [REDACTED]
Tel. (GR): [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

If volunteers have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, they should contact the Secretary of the University Ethics Committee that initially approved this research, on [REDACTED] or telephone [REDACTED]

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

General Research Information Sheet

For the doctoral research project called:

National and European Identities during the Eurozone Crisis: The Case of Greece

The researcher and her institution

The person responsible for the research project named above is Ioanna Ntampoudi, doctoral researcher at the Aston Centre for Europe at Aston University in Birmingham, UK. Ioanna has studied Sociology and Political Science in the past and is currently conducting social and political research for the purposes of her doctoral degree. This research project, and the data collection that you are asked to contribute to, form the main body of Ioanna's doctoral thesis. The Aston Centre for Europe is the main research centre at the Politics and International Relations department at Aston University and it specialises in European politics. The research project will last until 2015 or 2016.

The sponsoring bodies

Ioanna's research is sponsored by the School of Languages and Social Sciences at Aston University by the means of a full studentship that covers both tuition fees and living expenses. In addition, Ioanna's fieldwork and data collection activities are sponsored by a fieldwork scholarship from the UACES, the Academic Association for Contemporary European Studies in the UK. Both institutions disclose no special interests in how Ioanna conducts her research, other than following good practice, completing her thesis and acknowledging their generosity in her publications.

The research topic

Ioanna's research aims to look at the ways the economic crisis in Greece has impacted on Greek people's sense of national identity and the ways they understand their country's position inside the European Union. Ioanna's goal is to interview various people in Greece and ask them about what their thoughts, opinions and feelings are about the above issues. Topics that will be discussed during the interviews include the economic crisis, Greece's trajectory in the EU and the Eurozone area, support for European integration, the 'Grexit' debate, Greek politics, origins and solutions to the crisis, Greek stereotypes, and relations to other Europeans.

The participant selection

Ioanna will be conducting group and individual interviews with people from different socio-economic groups of Greek society, such as students, unemployed, private sector employees, public sector employees, self-employed people, pensioners, and Greeks of the diaspora. This means that if you have been approached by Ioanna for the purposes of taking part in this research, you have been chosen because you belong to one of the above social groups, as will be explained to you by Ioanna herself. The number of people participating in the focus groups is between 70 and 85.

Ioanna will also be conducting individual interviews with various elites from the political, media and academic sectors. As an example, if you are a politician, journalist or university professor, you have been approached by Ioanna on the basis of the specialised knowledge you hold. The number of people participating in the elite interviews is 30.

After the interview

After the completion of the above interviews, the data will be stored safely to secure anonymity of the participants. The data will be analysed for the writing up of the present doctoral thesis and of journal articles or book chapters, while they will also be presented in conferences and research events, where the public will be predominantly academic. If any participant wishes to contact Ioanna, her contact details are provided below.

Contact details:

Ioanna Ntampoudi

PhD Candidate, UACES Scholar 2014
School of Languages and Social Sciences
Politics and International Relations
Aston Centre for Europe
Aston University

Address:

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United Kingdom

Email: [REDACTED]

Tel. (UK): [REDACTED]

Tel. (GR): [REDACTED]

Dear (Mr./Mrs/Dr./Prof.) _____,

My name is Ioanna Ntampoudi and I am a doctoral researcher at the Aston Centre for Europe at Aston University in Birmingham, United Kingdom. I am writing to you based on my capacity as a social and political researcher, in order to invite you to take part in my research as a respondent in an interview.

My project concerns the national and European identities of Greece in the context of the Greek debt crisis and the wider Eurozone crisis. You have been chosen as a potential participant based on the specialised knowledge you hold and your high degree of public influence. Part of my research is to interview influential people in Greece from the political, media and academic sectors. As such, your contribution would be most valuable for this piece of research.

I have included in the email/envelope an information pack containing information sheets that indicate general information about the research project itself, and the topics that would be covered during the interview. The pack also includes a consent form that offers you the option to participate in this research and maintain your anonymity if you so desire. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if you need further clarifications. My full contact details can be found at the back of this sheet.

I hope that you will decide to devote an hour of your busy schedule to meet with me and discuss Greece's national identity and position in Europe and the European Union. I would be very grateful for your precious contribution.

Yours sincerely,

Ioanna Ntampoudi

Ioanna Ntampoudi

Doctoral Researcher, Aston University
UACES Scholar 2014

Contact details:**Ioanna Ntampoudi**

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Discussion Agenda Information Sheet

For the doctoral research project called:

National and European Identities during the Eurozone Crisis: The Case of Greece

The present information sheet provides details of the topics that will be discussed during the focus groups sessions. These details are provided to the participants prior to the group interview to ensure that they know what to expect of their interviewing experience. The following list provides an indication of the interview structure and themes of discussion:

- Introductions
- The Greek debt crisis
- Ideas about the Greek national identity
- The European Union
- The crisis and the Troika
- The European identity
- Closing remarks

